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Theatrical Reenactment in Pindar and Aeschylus

ANNA UHLIG

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THEATRICAL REENACTMENT IN PINDAR AND AESCHYLUS

What would Pindar and Aeschylus have talked about had they met at some point during their overlapping poetic careers? How do we map the space shared by these two fifth-century choral poets? In the first book-length comparative study of Pindar and Aeschylus in over six decades, Anna Uhlig pushes back against the prevailing tendency to privilege interpretive frames that highlight the differences in their works. Instead, she adopts a more inclusive category of choral performance, one in which both poets are shown to be grappling to understand how the vivid *here* and *now* of their compositions is in fact a reenactment of voices and bodies from elsewhere. Pairing close readings of the ancient texts with insights from modern performance studies, Uhlig offers a novel perspective on the “song culture” of early fifth-century Greece.

ANNA UHLIG is Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of California, Davis, where she is also a member of the Graduate Group in Performance Studies. Her research focuses on the performance culture of Greek lyric and dramatic poetry in the archaic and classical periods. She has published on a wide range of topics related to ancient Greek song and is co-editor (with Richard Hunter) of *Imagining Reperformance in Ancient Culture: Studies in the Traditions of Drama and Lyric* (Cambridge, 2017).

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ANNA UHLIG

University of California, Davis



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INTRODUCTION

PINDAR AND AESCHYLUS IN DIALOGUE

Imagining a Conversation

This book is an attempt to imagine a conversation between two fifth-century poets, Pindar and Aeschylus. I am not sure if such a conversation ever took place. If it did, it could have happened in Sicily, at Hieron's court in Syracuse where both Pindar and Aeschylus were hired to commemorate the tyrant's rule around 470 BCE,¹ or in Kamarina or Akragas, or in Gela, where Aeschylus is said to have spent his final days.² Or it could have occurred in Athens, the city for which Aeschylus so bravely fought at Marathon and whose citizens, it is said, honored him through the posthumous performance of his tragedies, despite his burial in Sicily.³ Pindar too owed a great debt to the city of Athens, or so the anonymous biographical tradition tells us, for it was there that he learned his trade as a poet and first received acclaim for his dithyrambic compositions.⁴ It might have been during those formative years, when the two young poets were still honing their skills, that they first sat down to talk shop. Other places and other times cannot be ruled out – Aegina, Cyrene, Thebes – but, admittedly, these locations offer less material with which to fantasize. Where and when we

¹ On the poetic vitality of Hieron's court, see Morgan 2015: 87–132.

² The ancient biographical accounts are unanimous on this subject. For discussion, see Lefkowitz 1981: 75–6, Sommerstein 1996: 8, and now Poli-Palladini 2013: 267–84 (and *passim* on Aeschylus' career in Gela).

³ According, at least, to the ancient *Vitae*. On the notoriously unreliable character of the ancient biographical tradition, see Lefkowitz 1981, Fairweather 1984, Kivilo 2010. Biles 2006 raises compelling doubt regarding the posthumous honors.

⁴ *Vita Ambr.* 1.11–16, 2.1 Drachmann, *Vita Thom.* 5.17, 6.1–3 Drachmann; cf. POxy 2438.8–10; see also the discussions of Hubbard 2001 and Hornblower 2004: 248–61.

choose to situate the exchange between our poets is, however, largely irrelevant. The goal of this book is simply to imagine that a conversation between Pindar and Aeschylus did take place – that it did not *not* happen, to borrow an idiom used in performance studies to which I will repeatedly return.

I adopt the conceit of a hypothetical conversation in part because it reminds us that Pindar and Aeschylus were indeed contemporaries. They worked in the same places at the same times. Their patrons and audiences were often the same. They are linked in a way that is indisputably, historically real. But this historical reality is tangential to the arguments that I pursue in this book. In fact, the comparative perspective undertaken here is intended as a deliberate departure from the overwhelmingly historicist bent of scholarship on Pindar and Aeschylus in recent decades.⁵ The so-called performative turn in Classics has brilliantly elucidated the importance of context and occasion – of *Sitz im Leben* – for understanding ancient song culture. But the study of performance, and performance history, is not exhausted by the detailed and sophisticated reconstruction of past events. My aim here is not to recreate a historical exchange between Pindar and Aeschylus, even one knowingly cast in suspicion by dutiful reminders of the partial and uncertain nature of our evidence. Imagined conversations were an important facet of the ancient literary-critical toolbox, well-known to modern scholars from texts such as Aristophanes' *Frogs*, the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*, or Lucian's *Conversations with Hesiod*. Like the unabashedly fictionalized encounters recounted in those ancient works, what follows is, emphatically, not the transcript of an actual exchange. The conversation imagined here is not meant to be

⁵ I am hardly alone in recognizing the need for a methodology that is less markedly shaped by the political or social realities of the ancient world. Both Sigelman 2016 and Phillips 2016 articulate a kindred desire to engage something beyond historically directed interpretation in their analysis of Pindar's work, as does Gurd 2016 in his discussion of the auditory experience of archaic and classical song. I believe that similar motivations are found in the recent publications of Nooter 2017 and Spelman 2018, both of which reached me too late to be incorporated into the arguments presented here. I explore the potential drawbacks of historicist interpretation more fully in Uhlig 2018b, with reference to Alcaeus.

a real one. Its complete and total inaccessibility – the fact that this event, if indeed it ever took place, is entirely lost to all but the two participants – is part of its allure. The point is neither to know what was said (*wie es wirklich war*) nor to ground speculation in the reassurances of historical plausibility and verifiable facts. Pindar and Aeschylus may well have exchanged political views regarding developments in Athens or Syracuse, or gossiped about the whims of patrons and audiences in those places or elsewhere. It is not implausible to imagine that they compared notes on Stesichorus' *Oresteia*, a work that clearly influenced both poets. But these are not the conversations that I seek to imagine in this book. My goal in joining Pindar's and Aeschylus' voices in dialogue is to try to hear something beyond direct poetic correspondence or isolated moments of interaction. It is a conversation about how Pindar and Aeschylus approached what modern scholars have come to call *performance*, a broadly conceived notion which finds no true correlate in Pindar's and Aeschylus' time, but which the Greeks of the fifth century might have called *mousike*, the live and living expression of choral song.⁶

Before turning to the content of Pindar and Aeschylus' imagined exchange, I would like to make a little more space for thinking about how their meeting might have taken place. My fantasy conversation is grounded in a simple premise: that Pindar and Aeschylus shared something. This notion is hardly controversial. Yet for many scholars the features that distance these two poets may be more compelling than those that bring them together.⁷ Coincidentally (or not), the scholarly tendency to prioritize contrasts over continuities maps neatly onto the likely coordinates of the poets' hypothetical encounter. For, while Sicily and Athens are the two sites that most convincingly link these two poets in our ancient testimonia, they are also sites that contemporary scholars have come to associate with a segregated treatment of Pindar's and Aeschylus' lives and work. In the

⁶ The idea of *mousike* is well explored by Murray and Wilson 2004.

⁷ Finley 1955 represents a particularly overt example. More recently, see e.g. Nagy 2000, Kurke 2013.

socio-politically determined landscape of contemporary classical studies, Sicily, the home of powerful tyrants and autocratic dynasties, has come to symbolize Pindar's reactionary celebration of the aristocracy. The democratic city of Athens, by contrast, serves as the perfect frame for the egalitarian and progressive views of its homegrown playwright and hero, Aeschylus. Actual scholarship on the socio-political import of Pindar's and Aeschylus' work is, of course, far subtler than this simplistic geographic binary can reflect. When viewed on their own, both authors are treated to sophisticated socio-political analysis, for example, in Mark Griffith's or Simon Goldhill's work on Aeschylus and Leslie Kurke's, Kathryn Morgan's, or Lucia Athanassaki's studies of Pindar.⁸ Nor is the segregation of these two poets universally maintained, as exemplified by the inclusive perspective of Deborah Steiner, who consistently approaches these two authors as true contemporaries and whose insights and methodology inform my thinking throughout this book.⁹ Nevertheless, the idea that Pindar and Aeschylus belong to different spheres, different epochs almost, is a tacit assumption that guides a striking amount of modern scholarship on both authors.

Why, then, does modern scholarship continue to segregate these contemporary poets? The differences between Pindar and Aeschylus may be cast in terms of "political outlook," "socio-political status," and/or "performance context," and attending to these important features has produced a wide range of excellent scholarship over the past decades. But, to a certain degree, these finer distinctions can all be traced to the one glaring feature that separates these two poets: the difference in form between Pindar's "lyric poems" and Aeschylus' "tragedies." Of course, striking formal differences do not preclude sympathetic comparison, as Simon Hornblower's study of Pindar and Thucydides makes clear.¹⁰ Yet distinctions of

⁸ I am thinking particularly of Griffith 1995 and Griffith 1999; Goldhill 1986 and Goldhill 2000; Kurke 1991; Morgan 2015; Athanassaki 2003; and Athanassaki 2011.

⁹ Especially Steiner 1994 and Steiner 2001; see also, recently, Grethlein 2010 who looks at fifth-century texts from a variety of genres as expressions of a newly emerging relationship to the past.

¹⁰ Hornblower 2004.

genre, which hold sway over contemporary approaches to all of our surviving ancient Greek texts, prove stubbornly sticky in the case of Pindar and Aeschylus. When contemporary scholars do think of these two poets together, it tends to be precisely because of their generic differences, and as a means for better understanding the features that distinguish their work. The handful of occasions when both poets take up the same mythical narratives have served as a touchstone in this regard. Beyond the inevitable speculation as to whether Pindar influenced Aeschylus or the other way around, scholars have sought to identify the role of genre in shaping, and more importantly differentiating, the poets' distinctive treatment of their shared material. The stories of Orestes' matricide (told by Pindar in his P. 11 and Aeschylus in *Choephoroi*) and of the Argive expedition against Thebes (which Pindar treats in P. 8 and N. 9 and Aeschylus in *Seven Against Thebes*) have been singled out by scholars to emphasize the structural divisions between "epinician" and "tragedy" or "drama" and "lyric."¹¹ There can be no doubt that the two poets' approaches to these narratives differ in many respects, and generic analysis has proved a fruitful means of juxtaposing these works. At the same time, analysis based on genre predisposes a contrastive view of Pindar and Aeschylus, privileging certain formal/contextual characteristics at the expense of others. In order to hear a more harmonious conversation between these poets, the siren song of generic categorization has to be muted to some degree.

There are many good reasons to be skeptical of genre, a means of categorization that is famously difficult to define and identify, and all the more so when it comes to ancient Greek poetry.¹² But I am less concerned with the accuracy of modern scholarly taxonomies than with the disproportionate weight

¹¹ On Orestes, Finglass 2007: 11–17, Kurke 2013. On Thebes, Nagy 2000, Griffiths 2014: 736–8, Foster 2017. Poli-Palladini 2016: 36–47 explores the possible influences of Pindar's Athenian dithyrambs on Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*.

¹² For an overview of the range of modern definitions of genre, see e.g. Duff 2000. On the difficulties attendant in identifying ancient categories, see the classic study of Davies 1988 as well as Depew and Obbink 2000, Ford 2006.

that they are currently allotted in our critical outlook. By way of illustration, I offer an example from more recent history, though one taken not entirely at random. In the golden age of Hollywood cinema, films were conceived along the lines of well-formulated genres. Westerns had horses and gunfights, musicals had showy costumes and elaborately choreographed dances, “women’s pictures” were brooding and languid. And yet, who would say that we can discuss any of them properly without speaking about “film?” We would miss the forest for the trees. The importance of this larger category is underlined by F. Scott Fitzgerald, as he reflected on his own experience as a writer trying to make it in Hollywood in his final, unfinished novel, *The Last Tycoon*. At the outset of the novel, one of the characters marvels at the feat achieved by the handful of men, “no more than half a dozen,” who “have ever been able to keep the whole equation of pictures in their heads.”¹³ “Pictures” – the catch-all term for film at the time – is a notion that goes beyond the ready distinctions of genre; it gestures to the collective endeavor of those working in a place, both real and imagined, called Hollywood. Its totality – the “whole equation” as Fitzgerald calls it – is a thing that can be understood “only dimly and in flashes.”¹⁴ But the reality, and importance, of film as a category writ large is not diminished by the impossibility of comprehending it.

The spirit of Fitzgerald’s “whole equation” is what motivates my desire to listen for continuities and unexpected harmonies in (different types of) choral song rather than to reinforce the distinctions with which we are accustomed to parcel these songs into discrete spheres. Although this book is by no means an attempt at a comprehensive account of the world of Greek song in the fifth century BCE, it does aspire to describe (albeit “dimly and in flashes”) something shared in one very small corner of this world. In fact, this book does not even offer a comprehensive map of this imagined landscape, a space no

¹³ Fitzgerald 1994: 3; see also the discussion in Thomson 2004: 18–22, to which my citation of the passage is indebted.

¹⁴ Fitzgerald 1994: 3. The same notion seems to inform the Coen brothers’ 2016 *Hail, Caesar!*

A Porous Choral World

larger than was needed to contain two poets at the same time. Rather than attempting to exhaust the possibilities of a comparative analysis of Pindar and Aeschylus, I focus on one particular strand of their commonality, namely the way that both poets use their songs to explore the idea of performance. What follows, then, is a description of how Pindar and Aeschylus give a distinctive shape to the voices and bodies within their compositions in order to reflect on the practice of choral performance – of creating a world of song *with* voices and bodies. This conversation represents a strand of what John Herington famously identified as a broadly conceived “song culture,” linking the disparate choral voices of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE.¹⁵ At the same time, the highly circumscribed nature of this study, focusing only on a handful of illustrative passages from two poets amongst many, does not constitute a comprehensive claim about choral song in its totality. It is, rather, a provocation, with ample space for many more voices and imagined encounters.

A Porous Choral World

The song culture of late sixth- and early fifth-century Greece that Herington describes, and in which I situate Pindar and Aeschylus, is one in which genre is not definitive. One can still, correctly, call Pindar a “lyric” or “epinician” poet and Aeschylus a “dramatic” or “tragic” one. But far more important is the fact that both are “choral”, or “melic”, poets,¹⁶ working in a broad tradition of complex song-making that was, from what our limited evidence indicates, undergoing a process of radical transformation in nearly every quarter.¹⁷ The unsettled landscape of the choral world in this period redefined the nature of performance. The precise character and attributes of the changes remain murky, and the local manifestations of shifts in the broader song culture took strikingly different forms. But

¹⁵ Herington 1985.

¹⁶ I use the terms “choral” and “melic” interchangeably. On the complex history of this terminology, see Budelmann 2009: 2–4, with bibliography.

¹⁷ Herington 1985, Kowalzig 2013, Csapo 2013.

the effects can be traced throughout the Greek Mediterranean. Returning to the analogy of twentieth-century Hollywood suggested by Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon*, the invention of "talkies," which fundamentally restructured the world of film in the 1930s, may not be an exact analogue, but it is not so wide of the mark. By extension, and without wanting to push this potentially helpful correspondence beyond its limits, we might think of the texts under consideration here along the lines of the 1952 MGM Gene Kelly masterpiece *Singing in the Rain*. This nostalgic story about the introduction of sound to moving pictures, written and filmed some decades after the fact, offers a historically informed and acutely self-conscious meditation on the technological developments that make its own existence – a technicolor production built around elaborate song and dance numbers – possible. It is, perhaps inevitably, a film at once so generically heterodox as to be almost unclassifiable and unambiguously a "musical." The works of Pindar and Aeschylus may not present us with anything like the explicitly historical self-dramatization of *Singing in the Rain*, but the passages on which I focus in this book all contain something of the film's spirit of trans-generic self-reflection. They too are shaped by an interest in the shared conventions and new techniques that underpin the "whole equation" of a common endeavor.

Hollywood's invention of "talkies" may be a good model for thinking about the broad effects that disruptive innovation can produce, but it also reminds us that both Pindar and Aeschylus find themselves in the same post-innovation period. Until relatively recently, scholars have mainly treated the many overt similarities between tragedy and lyric as the result of generic evolution. The new dramatic forms of the late sixth century BCE, of which tragedy was the prime example, were thought to have developed out of the lyric tradition that they would soon displace. This disposition led many scholars to treat lyric texts as in some way prior to tragic ones, mirroring the presumed development of tragedy out of lyric.¹⁸ Compelling though

¹⁸ Bassi 1998: 1–3 offers a compelling critique of the scholarly compulsion towards a "story of origins" for Attic drama.

this teleological narrative may be, and it has proved perversely resilient over the span of centuries, there is, simply put, no evidence to support it.

The sixth-century origins of drama remain intractably obscure. The earliest dramatic texts that we have date to a period when tragedy was already well-established in its own right. Based on the record now available to us, there is simply no way to know what factors influenced the development of the choral forms classed under the heading of “drama” or to confidently reconstruct the shape taken by the forerunners of the forms that we know.¹⁹ Our ignorance of sixth-century dramatic and proto-dramatic poetry is matched by an almost equal ignorance of the non-dramatic choral poetry of the period. With the exception of Alcman’s distinctively Spartan songs from the seventh century, we have virtually no record of the elaborate choral forms such as dithyramb, paean, partheneion, or threnos – the forms from which drama is presumed to have developed – that dates to before the end of the sixth century.²⁰ Despite the limited evidence, and the fact that there can, by definition, be no firm proof of their suppositions, scholars have recently begun to interpret this evidentiary silence as an indication that non-dramatic poetry underwent significant changes during the period, evolving into new forms alongside dramatic counterparts.²¹ It may well be that our inability to find antecedents for so many of the choral forms that came to dominance in the fifth century stems from their relative novelty. This provocative and compelling speculation informs the work that I undertake in this book. Nevertheless, the conversation that I will try to trace is a distinctly fifth-century affair, free from overt concerns about origins or evolution. One aim of setting the work of Pindar and Aeschylus together is to acknowledge,

¹⁹ Recent discussions include Rusten 2006, Csapo and Miller 2007, Csapo 2013.

²⁰ On the problem of generic identification, particularly with respect to choral vs. solo performance, in the archaic period see Davies 1988, Cingano 2003. The particularly problematic status of Stesichorus’ works is discussed by Carey 2015: 52–6, who argues in favor of choral performance, and West 2015: 78–80, who argues against it.

²¹ See e.g. D’Angour 1997, Porter 2007, Prauscello 2012, Kowalzig 2013.

indeed to celebrate, the fact that our understanding of both dramatic and non-dramatic choral poetry is derived from evidence dating to a period in which both forms, whatever their origins, were already in full flower. The shared spaces and trans-generic commonalities pursued in this study arise from a desire to abide by the structures of a historical record in which nearly all forms of choral song are stubbornly contemporary.²²

The historical contemporaneity of choral forms is not only matter of chronology. It is, rather, a dialogue that makes itself felt in the songs themselves. As Laura Swift and others have explored in detail, dramatic compositions readily incorporate terminology and phrasing from non-dramatic forms, whether it be the singing of a choral paean or the invocation of epinician structures and formulae.²³ These allusions to other choral forms are not evocations of an idealized lyric past. There was no pre-lapsarian period of choral purity before tragedy, as was often alleged, confused all of the genres.²⁴ Nor, as Pauline LeVen has made comprehensively clear, did non-dramatic choral poetry cease to matter once actors took to the stage.²⁵ Rather, the generic polyphony of tragedy marks an active dialogue with forms of choral song that remained very much alive and vital throughout the fifth century and beyond. The interdependence is conspicuously marked in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, our earliest fully extant example of explicit dramatic criticism. When Aristophanes' Dionysus accuses Aeschylus of pilfering his songs from rope-haulers, the playwright rejects the low-brow implications of the insult, but not the basic premise that his plays, and those of his competitors and successors, drew on a wide range of other types of choral song (*Ran.* 1297–1303). For a late fifth-century theater audience, there could be

²² Ley 2007: 181 rightly notes that “[t]he origins of the *choroi* performed in the theater of Dionysus may be intriguing, but the fact remains that we must study them as comparative forms, much as the Athenians watched them.”

²³ Swift 2010, see also e.g. Rutherford 1994–5, Calame 1994–5, and most recently the contributions to Andujar et al. 2018.

²⁴ Ford 2002: 250–71 provides an excellent account of how fourth-century critics developed a regimented structure of genre that was then anachronistically applied to earlier practice.

²⁵ LeVen 2014.

no question that tragedy retained an active engagement with the broader choral tradition.

But what of the tragedians' non-dramatic counterparts? Although the phenomenon has received relatively little scholarly attention, there is reason to suspect that poets of dithyrambs and paeans and other elaborate choral forms were, for their part, influenced by the compositions of their dramatic contemporaries.²⁶ The most notable example is Bacchylides 18, a short song of only four strophes, classed as a dithyramb but composed in the form of a dialogue, as if it were a drama.²⁷ Like a tragedy, the song is entirely devoid of framing narration. The song begins without formal introduction, as a chorus comprised (as we will soon learn) of Athenians address their king in a bold vocative: Βασιλεῦ τᾶν ἱερᾶν Ἀθανᾶν, τῶν ἁβροβίων ἄναξ Ἰώνων (*King of holy Athens, lord of the gentle Ionians* 1–2).²⁸ The chorus of Athenians pour out their concerns to their King, who then responds to their words with a speech of his own. The dialogue reveals the source of their angst to be the imminent arrival of Theseus in the city, but the song ends as abruptly as it began, before the mysterious stranger has made his appearance. Bacchylides' unusual composition can be dated to no earlier than the beginning of the fifth century, when the poet began his career.²⁹ It is, therefore, implausible to think of this dialogic dithyramb as a precursor to dramatic forms that were already enjoying success across the Greek-speaking world. The song can only properly be called a response to, and wholesale appropriation of, the exciting new possibilities for choral performance that drama had already popularized.³⁰ More importantly, the fully dialogic form

²⁶ Battezzato 2013: 96–9 offers a persuasive account of dramatic influences on dithyramb, with bibliography.

²⁷ *Bacch.* 18 has received surprisingly little scholarly attention, but see Burnett 1985: 114–15, 117–23; Zimmermann 1989: 95–100, Maehler 1997: 211–41, Athanassaki 2016.

²⁸ The strophe ends with a parallel vocative: ὦ Πανδίωνος υἱέ καὶ Κρεούσας (15).

²⁹ On the dating of the poem, see Maehler 1997: 212–14.

³⁰ Maehler 2004: 193 suggests that it might be a direct response to the parodos of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, though his identification of so specific an influence is both unfounded and otiose.

of Bacchylides 18 underlines the difficulty of drawing firm distinctions between the different genres of choral song. As Giambattista D'Alessio has observed, in the early fifth century "the line between the form of a 'lyric' text and a 'dramatic' one is nearly undetectable."³¹

It is within this larger frame of a "song culture" in which various types of choral performance, new and old, continuously interacted with and reshaped each other that the works of Pindar and Aeschylus find their common ground. It is a trans-generic outlook rooted in the porous boundaries that did not yet segregate dramatic performance from other forms of choral expression. The reciprocally transformative dialogue which galvanized the world of song in the early fifth century is both backdrop and inspiration for the model of theatrical reenactment that these two poets explore through their own compositions.

Performance and the *Theatrical*

If the geographic coordinates of Syracuse and Athens permit us to imagine the kind of shared space that Pindar and Aeschylus might have inhabited, another spatial metaphor, that of the ancient theater, may be best suited to conjuring the world of choral performance within which their works take shape.³² Although contemporary scholarship tends to associate ancient theaters, literal and figurative, primarily with dramatic forms, these spaces were in fact host to a variety of non-dramatic choral forms,³³ most notably the dithyrambic choruses which preceded the tragic competitions of the Great Dionysia in Athens.³⁴ The historical reality of the ancient

³¹ D'Alessio 2007: 97 (translation mine). The quote continues "and deserves to be studied with greater attention." I return to this aspect of his argument in Chapter 5.

³² In the taxonomy of Levine 2015, the former permit us to think about the overlapping networks of choral poets, the later present a container (whole) which helps to articulate the parameters of the category.

³³ Slater 2007 offers a salutary warning on the limitations of our evidence regarding ancient choral festivals.

³⁴ Kowalzig and Wilson 2013b: 13–18, with bibliography. See also Ceccarelli and Milanezi 2007. Chaniotis 2007 explores the wide range of "non-artistic performances" in the ancient theater.

theater as a space in which different types of performance jostled alongside each other, sharing physical venues as well as the imaginations of a common audience, suggests its relevance as a metaphor for the type of inclusive, trans-generic approach to choral performance that guides this book.

The dangers of an overly circumscribed notion of “the theater” are of no less concern to classicists than to scholars of contemporary performance, though for somewhat different reasons. Fifth-century Greeks, contemplating choral poetry before the emergence of the regimented taxonomies of the Hellenistic period, would not yet have excluded non-dramatic forms from the boundaries of “the theater.”³⁵ Conversely, modern critics of twentieth- and twenty-first-century performance have found that the unprecedented expansion of forms has called into question the formal structures which once defined the field. In our contemporary world, there is no (longer a?) distinction between the formal space/genre that was once called “the theater” and other venues/types of performance.

In light of such seismic theoretical and practical shifts in modern performance studies, the idea of “performance” itself has undergone significant revision, with many in performance studies and elsewhere extending the category to encompass all aspects of life and culture.³⁶ This maximalist definition of performance, based in the philosophical linguistics of J.L. Austin and finding its most powerful form in the queer feminist theory of Judith Butler,³⁷ has much to recommend it for those interested in social structures, whether ancient or modern. For the purposes of this book, however, I adopt a somewhat narrower notion of performance, one which recognizes that there is still a distinction between events that are formally and explicitly framed as “performance,” on the one hand, and the performative nature of human experience more broadly, on the other. Diana Taylor makes this point with elegant clarity when she observes that while “almost anything can be

³⁵ Of course, theaters continued to be used for non-dramatic performances long after the scholarly regimentation of genres.

³⁶ See recently e.g. the contributions to Striff 2003 and Davis 2009.

³⁷ Austin 1975, Butler 1990, Butler 1993.

analyzed AS performance,” not every action or event is said to *be* a performance.³⁸

But even for those who see value, as I do, in maintaining a marked category of formal performance beyond the experiences of everyday life, there is less and less ground for maintaining a category of “theater” or “drama” as separate and distinct from other types of embodied expression. As the venues in which scholars situate authoritative “artistic” performance have expanded well beyond the confines of traditional theaters, the need has emerged to formulate new ways of identifying and defining performance. My approach to Pindar and Aeschylus in this book is shaped in important ways by this evolving critical discourse, in particular by two complementary models developed by Rebecca Schneider and Joseph Roach which contribute important interpretive structures and vocabulary to the project of articulating the shared performative outlook of these two fifth-century poets.

Both Schneider and Roach base their approaches on the uneasy balance between the immediacy of performance (as a singular and unmediated experience) and the manifold ways in which this immediacy is undermined, falsified, or otherwise called into question.³⁹ The primary difference between the two theorists lies in the way this paradox is characterized. Schneider places emphasis on the spatio-temporal axis, seeing a common thread in the ways that various types of formal performance, traditional and otherwise, reenact something of the past while at the same time revealing and exploring the temporal disjunctions between past and present. For Schneider, “the theater” is not defined by a certain type of physical space, the generic parameters of a specific work, or the purpose for which a specific performance is undertaken. Theater is a disposition, a desire to bring into presence what is absent, to explore the relationships between what is here and what is not, between past and present, between self and other. Schneider’s

³⁸ Taylor 2016: 31.

³⁹ The inescapability of repetition is a prominent feature of Butler’s model of quotidian performance, ultimately stemming from her interpretation of Derrida.

work focuses on contemporary performances, whether civil war reenactments or the avant-garde theater of the Performing Garage, that foreground recursive iterations and complex layers of reduplication. In all of these forms, Schneider identifies a common impulse to erase and at the same time expose the gap – the “crease” or “fold” – that stands between and joins the *here* and *now* of the performance taking place and the many (overlapping, contradictory, imaginary) *theres* and *thens* of its composition, whether these be past and future performative iterations, historical realities, or historical fictions. Schneider uses a range of evocative adjectives to describe this recursive disposition: uncanny, citational, syncopated. Each highlights the simultaneous sameness and difference – spatial, temporal, somatic – that underpins the fundamental act of repetition that is performance. For Schneider, the very idea of mimesis, however one defines that fraught and overdetermined term so central to our modern conception of (ancient) artistic expression, cannot be separated from the act of replication; it makes anew, giving new form – new voice, new body, new expression – to something that already is/was.⁴⁰ Performance, as Richard Schechner has famously declared, is “never for the first time.”⁴¹ Its rhythms are iterative, endlessly looping back on the unseen foundations that give it shape, give it life.

Where Schneider looks to temporal markers, Roach builds his discussion around the notion of surrogacy; of vicarious or substitute action and expression. Roach defines the surrogate relationship as “the process of trying out various candidates in different situations – the doomed search for originals by continuously auditioning stand-ins.” And he contends that it is this essential dynamic that “emerges as the most important of the many meanings that users intend when they say the word *performance*.”⁴² Roach’s work points to the emphatically

⁴⁰ On the complexity of the ancient discourse of mimesis, and our modern mis- and re-appropriations of it, see Halliwell 2002.

⁴¹ Schechner 1985: 36. So too, from a Derridean perspective, Blau 1982: 148 observes “that there is something in the very nature of performance which ... implies *no first time*, no origin, but only recurrence and reproduction. ... that is why performance seems *written* even when there is no TEXT ... it seems, moreover, corporeally inscribed, even when there’s a performance without any body” (italics original).

⁴² Roach 1996: 3 (italics original).

somatic nature of the recursive patterns of performance, even as it delves into the same temporal iterations that motivate Schneider. For Roach, reenactment is, above all, something undertaken by and with bodies, a corporeal endeavor that reproduces what is (now) absent through the embodied presence of performing surrogates.

Both Schneider and Roach present models of “theatricality” suited to the radically expanded definitions of formal “artistic” performance in our own twenty-first-century culture.⁴³ Yet their distinctly modern insights are surprisingly well suited to the equally expansive world of choral performance in early fifth-century Greece. The work of Pindar and Aeschylus demonstrates a strong tendency towards iterative, recursive patterns – of voice, body, and action – that reproduce within their songs the very temporal disjunctions and multifaceted topographies that Schneider and Roach explore in works composed many centuries later. Although Pindar and Aeschylus are hardly alone amongst ancient authors in expressing such concerns, the particular form of theatrical reflection found in their work is, I believe, unique to these two poets. Their distinctive conception of what it means to reenact, to bring what is absent into presence through performance, is at the heart of the conversation I am seeking to describe in this book. It marks the boundaries of the shared space in which these two choral poets find their voices in most fulsome harmony. Although the critical language that I adopt to give an account of this space is deeply influenced by the twenty-first-century discourse of performance, the space itself is nonetheless emphatically located in the fifth-century song culture of Pindar and Aeschylus. It is from their work that the conversation emerges, and thus it is from their voices that this study begins. More specifically, from the inherently recursive and explicitly framed voices that Pindar and Aeschylus bring to their songs through the formal device of embedded speech.

⁴³ The range of meanings that have been assigned to the term “theatricality” are discussed by Davis and Postlewait 2003: 1–38.

Embedded speech, which both Pindar and Aeschylus deploy in a similarly distinctive fashion, provides the fifth-century grammar, as it were, of the poets' imaginary conversation. [Chapters 1](#) and [2](#), which serve as the foundation for the interpretative strategies undertaken in subsequent chapters, examine the unique ways that Pindar and Aeschylus exploit embedded speech as a means of internally replicating the theatrical quality of choral performance. The voices of others, brought vividly into the *here* and *now* through vocal surrogacy, emerge through song to produce unsettling fusions, joining the past and present in anachronistic harmonies that draw attention to the syncopated, citational nature of Pindar's and Aeschylus' work. Both poets consciously deploy embedded speech in unusual forms, emphasizing the asynchronies, imbalances, and unstable repetitions that characterize not only these pointed moments of theatrical expression, but the texture of their songs more broadly. The examination of embedded speech reveals that, for these poets at least, there can be no such thing as a singular voice. Choral performance always entails structures of surrogacy and reenactment that endow the *here* and *now* of song with the properties of other times and places, of other voices and performances brought back into the present.

The complex layering and recursive polyphony – of temporal disjunction, precariously shared identities, and recursive performance – that Pindar and Aeschylus celebrate in their embedded speeches furnishes a model for thinking about other manifestations of their theatrical outlook. In the next chapters, materiality emerges as a central feature of theatrical reenactment in Pindar and Aeschylus. The vocal surrogacy of embedded speech is shown to depend on objects, be they artisan tools or performing bodies. [Chapter 3](#) explores the way that both poets foreground the role of instruments and other devices as material conduits of voice and identity. These objects facilitate the connection between performers, and performances, while at the same time taking on a certain agency of their own. As agents – craftsmen, performers, interpreters – come into contact with tools, they are joined together by means of the material intermediary, both using and finding themselves used

by the object through which their performance is shaped. The world of performance is mediated and shaped not only by voices from unseen singers (as in embedded speech), but by the instruments through which those voices make their way from *then* and *there* to *here* and *now*.

Chapter 4 addresses the corporeal component of this material instrumentality, the complement to the artisanal objects of the previous chapter. The complex interdependence of voice and tool is shown to be, above all, a question of somatic identity and presence. The construction of the performing body, the vessel able to give form to voice and action in performance, is governed by the same theatrical patterns of surrogacy and reenactment as embedded speech. Bodies, like voices, are the very stuff of song, and are subject to the same recursive and iterative forces. Their presence in the *here* and *now* is, like all else in theatrical performance, predicated on other bodies, elsewhere and unseen. Together, the first four chapters set out the essential elements – voice, tool, body – through which Pindar and Aeschylus define, and express, the theatrical nature of their compositions. Each of these elements represents a distinct facet of choral performance. At the same time, their mutual dependency reflects a cohesive model of analogous and entwined iterative expression that takes similar form in the work of both poets.

After emphasizing the close harmony of theatrical expression in Pindar and Aeschylus throughout the first four chapters, Chapter 5 considers the ways in which their theatrical outlooks differ. Building on the important work on choral deixis pioneered by Nancy Felson, Lucia Athanassaki, and others,⁴⁴ and drawing in particular on the insights of Giambattista D'Alessio,⁴⁵ I explore the subtle, yet important divergences in the worlds of performance that these two poets construct. Where Pindar fashions a *here* and *now* that is as

⁴⁴ Felson 1999, and Felson 2004b (with important contributions from Bonifazi 2004a, Calame 2004, D'Alessio 2004, Martin 2004, Peponi 2004), Athanassaki 2004, Athanassaki 2009b. The work of Bakker 1997a and Bakker 2005 on deixis in Homer represents a significant intervention from outside of the choral sphere.

⁴⁵ D'Alessio 2007.

mobile and opaque as the many *theres* and *thens* that give it form, Aeschylus establishes a fixed and decisive moment of performance, yet one which is nonetheless permeable, and susceptible to the influence of unseen elsewheres. Drawing on contemporary performance theory, I examine how the ghostly spirits of Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs emblemize their shared theatrical outlook while permitting us to appreciate this distinction in approach.

CHAPTER 1

VOICES OF OTHERS

EMBEDDED SPEECH IN PINDAR AND AESCHYLUS

I begin my description of the tiny corner of the world of song shared by Pindar and Aeschylus by looking to something even smaller: the unusual manner in which these poets employ embedded speech (also referred to as direct speech or *oratio recta*) in their work. The questions raised by the exploration of this extremely circumscribed category will provide a preliminary outline for the readings that I will develop in the remainder of the book.

Pindar and Aeschylus do not rely on embedded speech with great frequency or volume. The arguments that I advance here – the implications of which will be traced throughout the remainder of this book – are not, therefore, based on the quantity, or even the prominence, of embedded speech in these poets. Compared to Homer, or even Stesichorus, whose works contain vast swaths of *oratio recta*, Pindar and Aeschylus make sparing use of the trope. Of Pindar's forty-five extant epinician poems, twelve include embedded speech. Although the rate of occurrence in the epinicians hovers just below one-third of the poems, the relative brevity of the embedded speeches themselves means that they comprise approximately 10 percent of his epinician corpus. If we exclude P. 4, with its disproportionate use of embedded speech, the number falls closer to 4 percent.¹ Fragmentary texts yield five additional certain instances of embedded speech, and two more possible cases,

¹ O. 1.75–85; 4.23–7; 6.16–17, 62–3; 8.42–6; 13.67–9; P. 3.40–2; 4.13–57, 87–92, 97–100, 102–19, 138–55, 156–67, 229–31; 8.44–55; 9.30–6, 39–65; N. 10.76–9, 80–8; I. 6.43–9, 52–4; 8.35_a–45. See also Pfeijffer 1999: 531, Hornblower 2004: 325–6, Fearn 2012: 250–1.

though the woeful state of preservation makes it impossible to speak of frequency or ratios.² Each of Aeschylus' six extant plays contains at least one instance of embedded speech, as does *Prometheus Bound* (the Aeschylean authorship of which is now doubted by most scholars), amounting to around 2 percent of the total.³ Three additional occurrences are preserved in fragments.⁴ The device is most prevalent in *Agamemnon*, which includes five embedded speeches, comprising roughly 3 percent of the poem. On the other end of the spectrum, *Persians* includes only one case of *oratio recta*, whose three and a half lines represent 0.2 percent of the play. In other words, of the thousands of surviving lines of poetry composed by Pindar or Aeschylus, only a handful contain embedded speech.

The rare usage of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus signals that the form of vocal quotation itself is not a definitional feature of their poetry – as it is, by contrast, in Homer, where the majority of both epics is comprised of quoted speech.⁵ It is, rather, the particular way that Pindar and Aeschylus treat the voices of their embedded speeches that is of interest here. Recent decades have witnessed scholars engaged in heated debate about the kinds of voices that fill Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs.⁶ But voice, so central to any

² Hymn fr. 43 SM, Pae. 2.73–5, Pae. 4.39–?, Pae. 7b.?-42, Pae. 8a.14–?. Less certain are fr. 157, said to be the direct speech of Silenus, and fr. 168b, which the scholia attribute to a speech of Heracles.

³ *Pers.* 402–5, *Th.* 580–9, *Supp.* 402, 584–7, *Ag.* 126–55, 206–17, 410–26, 577–9, 590–2, *Ch.* 569–70, 575, 680–7, 829, *Eum.* 511–12, 757–60, *Prom.* 647–54. In addition, there are three instances in which objects are given voice in *oratio recta*: *Th.* 434, 647–8, and *Ag.* 1334. A treatment of all possible instances is provided by Bers 1997: 25–43. I exclude three passages that Bers adduces as *oratio recta*, *Ag.* 176–8 and 448–9, *Ch.* 313–14, on the grounds that gnomic or generalized utterances do not represent true impersonations of an embedded speaker's words.

⁴ Fr. 139.4–5 Radt (*Myrmidons*), fr. 159.4 Radt (*Niobe*), fr. 78.24 Radt (*Theoroi*).

⁵ On direct speech statistics in Homer, see Schmid and Stählin 1929: 92, Griffin 1986: 37. The importance of embedded speech for understanding the epics is explored by Martin 1989, Beck 2005, Beck 2012: 23–56.

⁶ On choral voice in general, Calame 1995 is foundational. On the Pindaric first person, see Lefkowitz 1991, Bremmer 1990, Morgan 1993, D'Alessio 1994, Currie 2013; on “oral-subterfuge” Carey 1981, Carey 1989a, Bonifazi 2000, Wells 2009. On Aeschylus, see Podlecki 1972, Rosenmeyer 1982: 166–9, Käppel 1999, Griffith 2009, and tragedy in general Calame 1994–5, Henrichs 1994–5, Silk 1999, Calame 1999, Barrett 2002, Dickinson 2009.

understanding of song, is notoriously difficult to pin down or describe. Embedded speech creates a kind of vocal microcosm; a lab experiment for the modern critic in which voice can be delineated and observed. The recreation of speech sets each quotation within a (more-or-less) formally structured frame that allows us to contemplate not only the speaker's words, but his voice as well, a fact which makes embedded speech a particularly useful tool for analyzing the vocal character of the songs in which it is found.⁷

It is difficult to generalize about the use of embedded speech throughout Greek archaic poetry. It is not a subject that has been treated to detailed or systematic analysis except in small-scale (usually single-author) studies,⁸ and the vast gaps in our record make firm assertions about trends or statistics perilous. Nevertheless, Pindar's and Aeschylus' use of this common poetic device differs in significant respects from what we tend to find in other extant Greek poets. By contrast with its more typical forms, embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus is characterized by atypically asymmetrical exchanges, a blurring of boundaries between embedded and framing voices, and an embrace of temporal uncertainty. These qualities are interesting and noteworthy in themselves and would render the embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus worthy of study in their own right as a distinctive feature of their poetic practice. But the patterns that emerge from what Wells calls the "metalanguage" of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus also reflect a broader disposition that finds expression in various forms throughout the works of these two poets.

As a form of vocal reenactment, embedded speech serves as a bridge between the iterative, syncopated temporality and surrogate expression that contemporary performance theorists such as Roach and Schneider have explored and the critical discourse of ancient poets themselves. As we will see, the model of mimetic voice that Pindar and Aeschylus delineate through

⁷ Wells 2009: 21–5.

⁸ On Homer, see Ch. 1 n. 5, on lyric, Führer 1967, on Stesichorus, Carey 2015: 60, on Pindar, Hornblower 2004: 317–26, on Pindar and Bacchylides, Fearn 2012, on drama, Bers 1997 (23–128).

the unusual form of their embedded speeches represents a distinctly fifth-century variation of the recursive substitutions and anachronistic juxtapositions that are so central to the evolving definition of performance in the twenty-first century. Embedded speech will serve as a touchstone throughout this book, but the exploration of embedded speech developed in this chapter and the one that follows offers only a preliminary, and decidedly limited, perspective on the way that the recursive rhythms of theatrical reenactment find expression in the works of Pindar and Aeschylus. The observations set out here thus stand as a foundation for the larger project of this book. A kind of basic syntax which helps us to better discern and describe more complex expressions of theatrical recursion.

First, some definitions and a bit of background.

Embedded speech (*oratio recta*) is a formal device that permits the voice of a primary speaker to be replaced by that of another speaker.⁹ This dynamic form of vocal impersonation is distinguished from its close relation, indirect speech (*oratio obliqua*), by the fully mimetic nature of the embedded quotation. Indirect speech subordinates a secondary speech within that of the primary speaker, so that the speaking voice remains that of the primary speaker even though the words he or she expresses are attributed to someone else: “He said that he was a grasshopper.” Direct speech, by contrast, allows the voice of the secondary speaker to be heard directly: “‘I am a grasshopper’ he said.” The primary (or “framing”) speaker of direct speech may be a narrator or a mimetic character, whether vaguely (e.g. *persona loquens*) or more specifically (e.g. Orestes) defined. The embedded (or “framed”) speaker is often identified as character from within a story the primary speaker is telling, though this need not be the case.

Whatever their respective identities, the relationship between the two speakers of direct speech is somewhat paradoxical.¹⁰

⁹ I use the terms “embedded speech” and “direct speech” interchangeably. Beck 2012: 5–10 provides a helpful overview of terminology.

¹⁰ A similar effect is found in modern fiction through the use of free indirect discourse, a related form of indirect speech, that raises complex questions about vocal identity, on which see Banfield 1982. On the possible use of this form in Homer, see Beck 2012: 57–78.

On the one hand, there is a straightforward shift in voice from primary to secondary speaker; one speaks, then the other. On the other hand, insofar as the primary speaker is giving voice to the speech of the secondary speaker, he or she continues to be heard in some form. In practice, the vocal duplication of direct speech often goes unnoticed, or is even suppressed entirely, particularly when encountered in written form. But the blending of two voices can also be used to striking effect, especially in the context of oral performance.¹¹ One such vocally charged use of direct speech is found in Sappho fr. 1 V, where an unexpected embedded speech explores a vocal dimension to the intimacy claimed between the poet and the goddess Aphrodite. The poem begins as a prayer to Aphrodite in the voice of the poet Sappho, but at some point the mortal speaker adopts the vocal identity of her divine addressee, speaking as Aphrodite to Sappho rather than the other way around. The transition is not flagged when it first occurs.¹² The speech just seamlessly shifts from mortal supplicant to divine benefactor. The vocal transformation is only made explicit once the embedded speech is well underway, when the goddess addresses Sappho by name: τίς σ', ὦ Ψάπφ', ἀδίκησι; (19–20).¹³

At its core, embedded speech of this kind is about voice; about expression and identity, rather than words. If metaphor challenges us to locate meaning in seemingly illogical statements (e.g. my dog is a grasshopper), embedded speech – which can be understood as another type of poetic *quid pro quo* – employs (mostly) logical linguistic statements that force

¹¹ Although it is possible to draw a broad distinction between marked and unmarked uses of embedded speech, there is no hard-and-fast line between these two categories. The blurring of lines is exemplified by the Homeric habit of addressing certain embedded speakers in the second-person (on which, see de Jong 2009: 93–9, with bibliography). The slight alteration of the traditional language of the *inquit* frame, shifting from the third-person to the second, draws attention not only to the relationship between framing speaker (the narrator) and the embedded character to whom he gives voice, but to the use of embedded speech itself, despite its regular appearance throughout the epics. At the same time, the relative frequency with which even this unusual form of *inquit* frame is deployed suggests that it too belongs to Homer's routine patterns of embedded speech.

¹² On the importance of standardized language of quotations (so-called *inquit* frames), see below 32.

¹³ See the recent discussion of Culler 2015: 13–16.

us to reconcile seemingly contradictory assertions of vocal identity. The primary speaker is *not* the embedded speaker, and yet takes on his voice and speaks *as if* he were. There is a vocal excess, two voices instead of one, and a resulting problem of identity: who is speaking?

The ability of embedded speech to prompt critical reflection about voice, identity, and poetic form was well appreciated in archaic and classical Greece. Two passages, one from shortly before and the other from just after Pindar's and Aeschylus' careers, exemplify the acute sensitivity to the power of this common poetic device. The later of the two passages, Plato's famous attack on vocal imitation in *Republic* 3, situates the conjunction of voice, identity, and poetic form front and center. The poets' habit of allowing speakers to adopt the voices of others, Plato warns, has serious ethical implications, leading men to express views, and adopt perspectives, that are not their own.¹⁴ Plato bases his claims on an influential division of poetry into three main categories – "mimetic," "diegetic," and "mixed" – based on the way that they represent voice (*lexis*).¹⁵ While Plato objects to the deceptions of "mimetic" expression, as epitomized by tragic drama, but he is no less hostile to the "mixed" form, in which an (ostensibly sincere) narrative voice ventriloquizes the speech of characters from within his or her narrative. Homer, he complains, "hides himself" (ἐαυτὸν ἀποκρύπτειτο ὁ ποιητής) when he allows the voices of his characters to obscure his own (*Rep.* 393c11–d3). In place of the vocal intricacies of Homer's epics, Plato imagines a version made ethically palatable (and aesthetically sterile) by the expurgation of embedded speech. It is unclear whether the resulting composition is meant to be taken seriously, but it is probable that Plato is picking up on a critical tradition that showed profound interest in Homer's use of embedded speech.¹⁶

¹⁴ Good recent discussions of this critical passage of Plato's poetic thought can be found in Destrée and Herrmann 2011, Winslow 2012, Morris 2013.

¹⁵ On the ancient reception of this tripartite model, see Fantuzzi 1988: 47–85, Halliwell 2002: 324, and Nünlist 2009: 94–102; Genette 1992 makes a compelling argument for the continued importance of this structure to the present day.

¹⁶ Plato's relationship to the broader scholarly tradition of poetic interpretation is well set out by Ford 2002: 209–26.

Beyond providing an example of the importance accorded to direct speech in ancient conceptions of poetry, Plato's discussion of poetic *lexeis* also prompts a reevaluation of the categories that we apply to poetic voices. Of particular relevance for the trans-generic comparison at the heart of this book, it is worth noting how Plato's tripartite schema posited a polar opposition between dramatic and non-dramatic forms of (choral) poetry that would go on to have a profound effect on poetic criticism and the entrenchment of genre categories.¹⁷ There is, however, good reason to question how well Plato's rigid vocal schema ever matched the reality of poetic practice, whether in his own time or before.¹⁸ While archaic dithyramb, the genre claimed to epitomize the "diegetic" voice, remains something of a puzzle for modern scholars, our limited understanding of the form would seem to contradict Plato's assertion that it lacked embedded speech.¹⁹ Furthermore, whatever Plato and his contemporaries may have claimed, the ideal of a "pure narrative" voice becomes particularly difficult to sustain in light of recent scholarly emphasis on the essentially "performative" or "mimetic" character of all (archaic Greek) poetry.²⁰ Our appreciation of the constructed, performative nature of the *persona loquens* of Theognis, for example, or the creative autobiography of Hesiod erodes any meaningful distinction between "diegetic" and "mimetic" poetry. For contemporary scholars of the ancient world, drama, the form most commonly associated with Plato's "pure mimesis" was only one of many "mimetic" forms of expression. Within this restructured landscape, embedded speech does not introduce mimetic expression (since mimesis is already present)

¹⁷ See Genette 1992: esp. 23–36.

¹⁸ See Peponi 2013: 358.

¹⁹ On dithyramb in general, see the contributions to Kowalzig and Wilson 2013a.

²⁰ D'Alessio 2007: 97 (quoted above 12). See also e.g. Herington 1985, Calame 1995, the contributions to Felson 2004b. Nagy 1996, Nagy 2013, and elsewhere, argues that mimesis is the fundamental property of archaic Greek song, though his equation of mimesis and ritual performativity requires that performance context be given an unusually (one might say untenably) large role in determining a song's mimetic character.

but redoubles it, layering an additional vocal identity on that which has already been constructed.

An interest in just this type of layered polyphony characterizes my second exemplary passage: the “compact and concrete instance of early artistic and performance criticism” found at the close of the Delian section of the sixth-century *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.²¹ Many of the features that emerge in the course of Plato’s discussion – vocal imitation, identity, generic distinctions – can already be found in this passage. Indeed, it seems likely that Plato’s overly rigid tripartite schema was developed in response to ancient theorists’ and practitioners’ long-standing interest in voice in general, and embedded speech in particular.²² But unlike the fourth-century philosopher, who will seek to stifle the vocal confusion of Homer’s “mixed” form, the sixth-century poet highlights embedded speech as a prime example of how virtuosic performers impersonate (μιμεῖσθαι) the voices and sounds of others.

In describing the exceptional performance of the Deliades, a chorus of maidens both mythical and historical, the poet of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* praises the scope of their vocal mimesis. The Deliades do not imitate the voice of a single speaker with particular accuracy. It is their ability to recreate the voices of “all men” that distinguishes their song.

πάντων δ' ἀνθρώπων φωνὰς καὶ κρεμβαλιαστὺν
μιμεῖσθ' ἴσασιν· φαίη δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕκαστος
φθέγγεσθ'· οὕτω σφιν καλὴ συνάρηρεν ἀοιδή.

(*HHApollo* 162–4)

They know how to impersonate (μιμεῖσθ') the voices and sounds²³ of all men. And each man would say that he himself was speaking, so beautifully is their song fitted together.

Beyond praising the singers’ ability to vary their vocal imitation, the *Hymn* notes a corresponding effect amongst the audience. As the Deliades perform, each person listening (αὐτὸς ἕκαστος) recognizes his own voice in the song, a detail which

²¹ Peponi 2009: 40. Also Lonsdale 1994.

²² On Plato’s literary-critical debts, see Ford 2002: 209–26.

²³ For discussion of the term κρεμβαλιαστὺν, see Miller 1986: 59, Peponi 2009.

Voices of Others: Embedded Speech

here and asks “Maidens, what man who comes here do you deem the sweetest of singers? In whom do you find the greatest pleasure?” Respond verily, all of you, about me “A blind man, who lives in rugged Chios, whose songs are all the best forevermore.” And I will carry your fame over the earth and you will be celebrated in the cities of men.

The vocal theatrics here take two distinct forms: a one-sided dialogue between poet and Deliades spoken by the poet in *propria persona* and an imagined future dialogue between Deliades and an unnamed man rendered in embedded speech. The second conversation is a subset of the first, consisting of the poet’s instructions to the Deliades as to how to respond to their future interlocutor, and the passage is characterized throughout by second person address: ἄγεθ’ (165), χαίρετε δ’ ὑμεῖς πᾶσαι (166), μνήσασθ’ (167), ὑμεῖς ... πᾶσαι ὑποκρίνασθ’ (171), ὑμέτερον (174). The conspicuously mimetic stance is a striking shift from the relatively anonymous narrative persona that the poet has inhabited since the *Hymn*’s outset.²⁶ The vocal transformation establishes the poet/narrator not only as an interlocutor, but also an analogue of the performers whom he so admires.

The two embedded speeches that the poet incorporates into his mimetic engagement with the Deliades offer the most conspicuous demonstration of the vocal analogy between poet and performer. In order to match the virtuosic vocal range of his addressees, the poet too must incorporate multiple voices into his performance. The poet thus gives both specificity and immediacy to the hypothetical conversation that he imagines may someday take place – with his own poetic skill as its subject. Voicing first the query of the unnamed stranger (ὦ κοῦραι, τίς δ’ ὑμῖν ἀνὴρ ἡδιστος ἀοιδῶν κτλ.) and then the Deliades’ response (τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ, οἰκεῖ δὲ Χίῳ κτλ.), the *persona loquens* transforms himself into – or, as Plato would say, hides himself behind – the speakers of his hypothetical exchange. The immediacy of the embedded speeches renders the unspecified future vividly present, giving vocal substance to the otherwise

²⁶ On the place of the address within the composition, Miller 1979.

vague identity of the wanderer and permitting us to hear the Deliades, so lauded for their own vocal performances, for the first time.

The embedded speeches allow the poet to split himself between two distinct, yet interconnected roles. On the one hand, he is a virtuosic poet demonstrating his ability to impersonate a range of speakers. On the other hand, by mimetically adopting the voices of others, he is able to transform himself into the object of the Deliades' praise (just as they had been the objects of his). Even as he gives voice to the Deliades, the poet undertakes a vocal impersonation of the unnamed wanderer (τις ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων) whose question sparks the dialogue while retaining his identity as the singer (τίς δ' ὕμιν ἀνὴρ) about whom the wanderer's question is posed.²⁷ The identity confusion that inspired praise for the Deliades' performance is now transposed onto the poet himself, as he moves from τις to τίς.

At its heart, embedded speech in the *Hymn* is employed as a tool to showcase, and also to delineate, a specific set of poetic values. The very attributes which the poet praises in the Deliades' performance – vocal range, identity confusion, blurring between audience and performer – are set in relief through the pointed deployment of embedded speech. The seemingly commonplace poetic device is turned to powerful effect as a sophisticated and self-reflective model of the poet's own notions of voice and performance.

The strategic use of embedded speech in the *Hymn* also serves as an exemplar for understanding Pindar's and Aeschylus' approach to the device. Like the marked exchange between the Deliades and their unnamed interlocutor, the embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus function as internal models of the particular way these poets thought about voice and performance. Where the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* emphasizes the critical role of polyphony and dialogue in producing well-fashioned song (καλὴ συνάρηρεν ἀοιδή), Pindar and Aeschylus exploit the properties of embedded speech to quite different

²⁷ Cf. Nagy 2013: 238.

aesthetic ends. For our choral poets, vocal asymmetry and isolation take the place of dialogic exchange, anachronism and temporal confusion are brought to the fore, and questions of identity and vocal blending are pushed to their limits. But, just as in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus point us towards the types of voices that these poets most prize.

Collective analysis reveals the embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus to exhibit three key characteristics that, when taken together, at once link these two poets and distinguish them from their predecessors and contemporaries: (1) the isolation of the embedded speaker from expected interlocutor; (2) the blending or merging of framing and embedded voices; and (3) the confusion of conventional chronology relating to embedded speech and/or a (corresponding) emphasis on temporally charged language, most notably prophecy, within the embedded speeches themselves. With the exception of the dialogic exchanges of Pindar's P. 4, a poem that stands apart from Pindar's other compositions for many reasons, all of the embedded speeches in Pindar and Aeschylus exhibit one of these features to a greater or lesser degree, and the majority combine two or three of these characteristics in a single instance. None of these features is unique to the works of Pindar and Aeschylus, but the frequency with which they are found, particularly found in combination, does differ from what is seen in the works of other archaic poets. The cumulative effect (whether it was acutely perceived by ancient audiences or not) is to upend established conventions of embedded speech and invite consideration of the oddness of a poetic device that allows one person to speak in the voice of another. Pindar's and Aeschylus' unconventional use of the familiar device, in other words, calls attention to the unconventional structures on which the mimetic replications and surrogate reenactments that constitute their choral performances are predicated. The unseen "crease" or "fold" of song is brought into view through the anachronistic harmonies of vocal reduplication. In what remains of this chapter I offer a brief, and by no means exhaustive, overview

of the distinctive way that embedded speeches are formulated in the songs of Pindar and Aeschylus.

Isolated Voices

In archaic Greek poetry, embedded speech is most often employed to relate a dialogue. It is rare to find an embedded speech that does not meet with a reply in embedded speech. As a result, embedded speech is typically best thought of in the plural: embedded speeches. The preference for dialogic exchange is most clearly displayed in archaic epic, where the normative reciprocity of embedded speeches is apparent in the very linguistic structures to which it has given rise. Symptomatic of this epic disposition towards embedded dialogue is the frequent incorporation of the verb ἀμείβειν (to respond) in so many of Homer's *inquit* formulae, a phenomenon which only makes sense in light of the almost inevitable pairing of multiple embedded voices.²⁸ The expectation that embedded speech will meet with like response is so strong in epic that hexameter poets even employed formulae to indicate its absence, lest the unexpected silence leave anyone uncertain.²⁹ The strong preference for dialogue and even pairing of embedded speeches found in lyric poets like Stesichorus and Bacchylides can be seen as a continuation of the epic disposition.³⁰ Even when it does not follow the regular back-and-forth rhythms of epic, dialogic exchange can play an important role in shaping embedded speech – as it does for the marked uses of embedded speech in Sappho 1 and the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* discussed above.³¹

²⁸ E.g., τὸν/τὴν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη(ς) (104×); ὧς φάτο, [...] καὶ ἀμείβετο μύθῳ (vel sim. 14×); ἀπαμείβετο φώνησέν τε (11×); ὅς μιν ἀμειβόμενος ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα (3×).

²⁹ E.g. οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῇ (16×), and even this is most often only a pause before another speaker offers a rejoinder. On silences in epic, see Montiglio 2000: 82–115. On conventions of speech in Homer, see Griffin 1986, Martin 1989, and more recently Beck 2001, Beck 2005, Beck 2012.

³⁰ On Stesichorus, see Carey 2015: 60, on Bacchylides see Fearn 2012.

³¹ In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the paired of embedded speeches are indeed a dialogue. The case of Sappho 1 is somewhat more complex, as the embedded speaker does not find an interlocutor in embedded speech, but in the mimetic voice of the

It is striking, then, that both Pindar and Aeschylus almost always treat embedded speech as a one-off and one-sided affair.³² By contrast with the evenly matched dialogues of their epic predecessors and choral contemporaries, the embedded speakers of Pindar and Aeschylus rarely find their voices met by a response in embedded speech. Sometimes this one-sidedness is a logical consequence of story structure (what narratologists call *fabula* or *histoire*): the embedded speeches are made in circumstances in which no response is possible. More often, however, the absence of dialogue is a result of choices made at the level of narration (of *discours* or *récit*). An embedded speech may meet with response in the logic of the story, but the utterance itself is suppressed in Pindar's or Aeschylus' song, either conveyed in drastically muted form or ignored outright.

The circumstances vary from song to song, but the underlying pattern remains the same: embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus appears in isolation. This choice is at once radical and understated, encoding an atypical, even unsettling, resistance to dialogue into the use of this common device at the most basic level. The marked divergence from long-established norms compels our attention and hints that something of consequence may be prompting this shift.

The notion that there is some deeper significance to the consistent isolation of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus finds preliminary confirmation when one considers the identities of those whose voices are heard and silenced. Both poets

framing speaker. In this respect, Sappho's usage more closely resembles that of Pindar and Aeschylus.

³² There are three exceptions to this rule, all found in Pindar (P. 4.87ff., P. 9.30–65, and N. 10.76–88). I discuss P. 4 in detail in [Chapter 2](#). The exceptional nature of P. 9 and N. 10 is signaled within the texts. In the former, an exchange between Apollo and the centaur Chiron, Chiron makes explicit reference to the gratuitous nature of his response, noting that Apollo's prophetic powers already grant him the knowledge that he is seeking from his interlocutor (P. 9.42–50). In N. 10, Zeus' unexpected response to Polydeuces' prayer results in the exceptional granting of shared immortality to the Dioscuri; their unique dual fate finds reflections in the unusual duplication of voice of the song. Notably, the end of the mythical narrative coincides with the end of the ode, though unlike in O. 4 (discussed below) there is a brief concluding *inquit* frame following Zeus' speech.

commonly compound the vocal segregation of embedded speakers by structuring the speech around a correspondingly asymmetrical relationship between the speaker and his or her silent (or silenced) addressee. In Pindar, the formal imbalance of embedded speech without response is regularly mirrored by an overt imbalance in status: gods addressing mortals, or mortals beseeching gods. In both Pindar and Aeschylus, the frequency with which prophetic voices are heard in solitary embedded speech highlights the divine foresight that sets the seer apart from his or her mortal companions.

Pelops' prayer to the god Poseidon in Pindar's O. 1 nicely illustrates the way that the identities of speaker and addressee can place added emphasis on the structural isolation of embedded speech. The speech comes towards the conclusion of Pindar's famous refashioning of the myth of Pelops' salvation by the gods and amorous affair with Poseidon.³³ Pindar's narrative continues through Pelops' return to mortal society, where he seeks out the hand of Hippodameia in marriage. Faced with the daunting challenge set by Hippodameia's father Oenomaus, Pelops turns to his erstwhile lover for aid. In the only instance of embedded speech in the lengthy mythical account (and, indeed, in the poem as a whole), Pindar gives voice to Pelops' lengthy plea for Poseidon's help.

ἔγγυς {δ'} ἔλθῶν πολιᾶς ἀλὸς οἶος ἐν ὄρνει
 ἄπνεν βαρύκτυπον
 Εὐτρίαιναν· ὁ δ' αὐτῷ
 παρ ποδὶ σχεδὸν φάνη.
 τῷ μὲν εἶπε· 'Φίλια δῶρα Κυπρίας
 ἄγ' εἴ τι, Ποσειδάον, ἐς χάριν
 τέλλεται, πέδασον ἔγχος Οἰνομάου χάλκεον,
 ἐμὲ δ' ἐπὶ ταχυτάτων πόρευσον ἄρμάτων
 ἐς Ἄλιν, κράτει δὲ πέλασον.
 ἐπεὶ τρεῖς τε καὶ δέκ' ἄνδρας ὀλέσας
 μναστῆρας ἀναβάλλεται γάμον
 θυγατρός. ὁ μέγας δὲ κίν-
 δυνος ἀναλκιν οὐ φῶτα λαμβάνει.

75

80

³³ On Pindar's treatment of the myth, see Köhnken 1974, Howie 1983, Nagy 1986, Hubbard 1987a, McLaughlin 2004, Morgan 2015: 234–51.

Isolated Voices

θανεῖν δ' οἷσιν ἀνάγκη, τὰ κέ τις ἀνώνυμον
 γῆρας ἐν σκότῳ καθήμενος ἔψοι μάταν,
 ἀπάντων καλῶν ἄμμορος; ἄλλ' ἐμοὶ
 μὲν οὔτος ἄεθλος
 ὑποκρίσεται· τὺ δὲ πράξιν φίλαν δίδοι.³⁴
 ὡς ἔννεπεν· οὐδ' ἀκράντοις ἐφάψατο
 ἔπεισι. τὸν μὲν ἀγάλλων θεός
 ἔδωκεν δίφρον τε χρύσειον πτεροῖ-
 σὶν τ' ἀκάμαντας ἵππους.

85

(O.1.71–88)

And coming close to the gray sea alone in the darkness he called out to loud-thundering Poseidon, who appeared close by his foot. And [Pelops] said to him: "If in any way the loving gifts of Aphrodite bring pleasure/gratitude, Poseidon, bind the bronze sword of Oenomaus, carry me on the swiftest chariots to Elis, and bring me into power. Thirteen suitors has he killed to delay the marriage of his daughter. Great danger does not seize a weak man, but why should one fated to die sit vainly in darkness through an anonymous old age, taking no part in all that is noble? This contest has been set before me. It is for you to grant me a good result." Thus he spoke, and he grasped with words that were not unfulfilled. And the god honored him by giving a golden chariot and tireless, winged horses.

There is much that can be said about the rich language of Pelops' emotional entreaty.³⁴ For my present purposes, however, it is the silence of his addressee that is of primary concern. When one considers Pelops' prayer in terms of its material outcome, the account suggests a continued connection between Poseidon and his erstwhile lover. The god reveals himself to the mortal at the edge of the sea (πὰρ ποδὶ σχεδὸν φάνη) and then fulfills his wish, granting him a golden chariot and winged horses. But Poseidon's proximity and acquiescence to Pelops' requests are counterbalanced within the formal structure of the poem by the god's insistent silence. Pelops' extended speech, comprising the majority of the poem's third antistrophe and epode, finds no vocal response from "loud-thundering" Poseidon. Where once they were joined by the

³⁴ Good discussions of the ode as a whole can be found in Felson Rubin 1984 and Athanassaki 2004.

“loving gifts of Aphrodite,”³⁵ now god and mortal cannot even find common ground in vocal intercourse. Pelops’ return to the world of men and his acceptance of the inescapability of death – a central plank of his entreaty to Poseidon (θανεῖν δ’ οἷσιν ἀνάγκη) – create a rupture that is mirrored in the asymmetry of the poem’s embedded speech.

In P. 3, Pindar explores the imbalance between divine and mortal speech from the opposite perspective. Now it is the god, not his mortal companion, who is heard to cry out in isolation. The embedded speech – once again the only instance in the poem – comes as Apollo’s faithless lover Coronis is about to be burned to death on the pyre, and with her the god’s unborn son Asclepius.³⁶ Unable to endure the death of his offspring, Apollo resolves to intervene.

ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ τείχει θέσαν ἐν ξυλίνῳ
 σύγγονοι κούραν, σέλας δ’ ἀμφέδραμεν
 λάβρον Ἀφαίστου, τότ’ ἔειπεν Ἀπόλλων· Ὀυκέτι 40
 τλάσομαι ψυχᾶ γένος ἁμόν ὀλέσσαι
 οἰκτροτάτῳ θανάτῳ ματρὸς βαρεῖα σὺν πάθῃ.
 ὥς φάτο· βάματι δ’ ἐν πρώτῳ κιχὼν παῖδ’ ἐκ νεκροῦ
 ἄρπασε· καιομένα δ’ αὐτῷ διέφαινε πυρά.
 καὶ ῥά νιν Μάγνητι φέρων πόρε Κενταύρῳ διδάξαι 45
 πολυπῆμονας ἀνθρώποισιν ἰᾶσθαι νόσους.

(P. 3.38–46)

But when the girl’s kin placed her upon the wooden pyre and Hephaistus’ greedy flame had surrounded her, then did Apollo say “No more can I bear for my offspring to die this most pitiable death, sharing the dire misfortune of his mother.” So he spoke, and arriving in a single step he snatched the child from the corpse. The raging fire parted at his coming. And he entrusted the child to the Magnesians Centaur to teach him to cure maladies that bring many woes to mortals.

The embedded speech, offered before Apollo has even approached the pyre, is set in stark isolation, both personal and

³⁵ Instone 1990: 35–9 explores the erotic aspect of the poem.

³⁶ On the ode in general, see most recently the excellent analysis of Morgan 2015: 260–99, with bibliography.

geographic.³⁷ The god does not address his words to a specific interlocutor, and they may not have been intended for anyone other than himself. They seem rather to stand as a talisman for the deed that is to come – a speech act almost equivalent to the actual salvation of Asclepius.³⁸ Apollo’s embedded speech does not look to other voices from within the mythical excursus for response. Instead, the unusual combination of isolation and efficacy suggest a kind of communication that transcends the traditional limits of voice.

The bold immediacy of Apollo’s vocal performance may lack a counterpart within Pindar’s account of Asclepius’ conception and birth, but his voice resonates within the ode as a whole. In particular, Apollo’s desire to save a mortal from certain death is a sentiment that harmonizes with the poem’s persistent interest in the possibility of transcending the limits of human mortality.³⁹ The interweaving of voice is most evident when one sets Apollo’s embedded speech, which occurs in the poem’s second epode, against the marked first-person statement with which Pindar begins the song. Like Apollo, the poet expresses his wish to save a mortal from death. In the place of the god’s unborn child, Pindar’s hopes are directed towards the long-dead centaur Chiron.

Ἥθελον Χίρωνά κε Φιλλυρίδαν,
εἰ χρεὼν τοῦθ’ ἀμετέρας ἀπὸ γλώσσας
κοινὸν εὖξασθαι ἔπος,
ζῶειν τὸν ἀποιχόμενον,

(P. 3.1–3)

*I would wish that Chiron the son of Phillyris were living,
although he is dead, if I must make this common prayer
with my own tongue.*

Whatever the precise goal of Pindar’s wish,⁴⁰ my interest here is in the way that the expression of desire is immediately followed

³⁷ Reflecting on the importance that the passage places on Apollo’s geographical distance from the pyre, Hubbard 1985: 24 astutely observes that “only the gods have a right to shoot from afar.”

³⁸ Compare Hutchinson 2001: 415, who observes that the poet’s instructions to his “messenger” Aeneas (O. 6.89–91) are “fulfilled in the act of uttering them.”

³⁹ See Morgan 2015: 272–99.

⁴⁰ See Young 1968: 33–4, Pelliccia 1987: 40–6, and most recently Morgan 2015: 273–4.

by an articulation of concern about the very act of voicing such hopes. Pindar worries that his own voice (ἀμετέρας ἀπὸ γλώσσας) will somehow be made common by its common utterance (κοινὸν ἔπος); it will be combined with the speech of others and, perhaps, thereby eclipsed.⁴¹ There is no suggestion that Apollo's divine voice, ringing out from afar, will suffer such a fate. Yet Apollo's expression too seems to partake of Pindar's κοινὸν ἔπος, insofar as it too conveys a desire to transgress the normal boundaries of human mortality.⁴² The solitary embedded voice of Apollo, isolated from conventional interlocutors within the mythical excursus, finds harmony in that of the framing narrator. The two speakers are brought into a remote and disjointed contact; not a dialogue *per se*, but a sympathy of expression that links their voices across stanzas – and space and time.

The isolation of embedded speaker from would-be interlocutor(s) is deployed to unusually powerful effect in the single example of embedded speech in *Persians*. As with the examples already discussed, the formal imbalance created through solitary embedded speech is highlighted by corresponding asymmetries of identity, geography, and even temperament. The speech comes as the messenger graphically narrates the moments just before the battle of Salamis.⁴³ As the Persian forces marshaled for the fight, he recounts, a lone Greek voice could be heard across the water.

καὶ παρῆν ὁμοῦ κλύειν
πολλὴν βοήν· ὦ παῖδες Ἑλλήνων, ἴτε,
ἐλευθεροῦτε πατρίδ', ἐλευθεροῦτε δὲ

⁴¹ So Morgan 2015: 274.

⁴² As the poem will later remind us, despite the divine reprieve at his birth, Asclepius will ultimately perish at the hands of Zeus when he tries to rescue another mortal from death (56ff.). The poet draws a clear moral from the tale: χρὴ τὰ εἰκότα παρ' / δαίμονων μαστευόμεν θνατοῖς φρασίν / γνόντα τὸ παρ' ποδός, οἷας εἰμὲν αἴσας. / μὴ, φίλα ψυχά, βίον ἄθάνατον / σπεῦδε, τὰν δ' ἔμπρακτον ἄντλει μαχανάν. (*It is necessary for mortal minds to seek fitting things from the gods, knowing what lies before our feet is the destiny we have. Do not, my soul, seek immortal life, but use to the full the resources of what is possible*: 59–62). But immediately after concluding that men should not aspire to immortality, Pindar nevertheless restates his wish that Chiron were still living to come to the aid of his ailing *laudandus* (63ff.), a scenario which aims to overturn death twice over; first for Chiron, and secondly for the victor whose life is threatened by illness.

⁴³ On the speech, see Barrett 1995, Barrett 2002: 28–40.

Isolated Voices

παῖδας γυναῖκας θεῶν τε πατρῶων ἔδῃ
θήκας τε προγόνων· νῦν ὑπὲρ πάντων ἁγών.’ 405
καὶ μὴν παρ’ ἡμῶν Περσίδος γλώσσης ῥόθος
ὑπηντίαζε, κοῦκέτ’ ἦν μέλλειν ἀκμή.

(*Pers.* 401–7)

And it was possible at the same time to hear a loud shout: “Sons of Greeks, come, free your fatherland, free your children, your wives, the seats of your paternal gods, and the graves of your ancestors! Now we fight for all!” And on our side the din of the Persian tongue met it, and it was no longer time to delay.

Where the Greek soldier is heard verbatim in embedded speech, the Persian “response” is suppressed as an undifferentiated din (Περσίδος γλώσσης ῥόθος). The vocal asymmetry is a metonymy – borrowed from Homer⁴⁴ – for the impending marshal conflict. Just as the clarity of the Greek soldier’s voice obscures the confused din that the messenger ascribes to the Persians, so too the order and rigor of the Greek navy will triumph over the chaotic Persian fleet.⁴⁵ The contrasting identities (Greek/Persian) and characters (clear/confused) of the speeches map on to the physical distance between the speakers. Positioned on opposing sides of the gulf they are less interlocutors than complementary performers/audiences.

The interpretive poignancy of *Persians*’ single embedded voice is compounded when one considers the unusual context in which the utterance is heard. As has often been observed, Aeschylus’ choice to set *Persians* in the capital, Sousa, creates a neat inversion between the perspective of the characters within the play – imagining events at distant Athens from their vantage in the Persian capital – and the audience members in the Theater of Dionysus – watching the reenactment of events at distant Sousa from their vantage in the Athens.⁴⁶ The embedded speech

⁴⁴ Cf. *Il.* 3.1–8, Garvie 2009: 196. On the Homeric tone of the messenger’s speech, see Barrett 1995, revised as Barrett 2002: 23–55.

⁴⁵ Goldhill 1988: 192, Hall 1989: 77, Gurd 2016: 66.

⁴⁶ See the discussions of Grethlein 2007, who describes the effect as a “mise-en-abyme,” and Gurd 2016: 64–73, who explores how sound and affect are mapped onto the play’s complex geography.

of the Greek soldier introduces the only Greek voice in this drama of *Persians*. Within the world of the drama, the vocal reenactment brings the urgency of the battle into view, but also transports the messenger's internal Persian audience momentarily into the alien ranks of Greek sailors desperate to defend their homeland. For the theater-goers, however, the double mimesis – an Athenian actor portraying a Persian messenger portraying an Athenian soldier – recalls the “embedded” character of all voices heard in the drama. In a certain sense the Persian voice of the framing speaker is no more authentic – no more present – than that of the nameless Athenian foe whose song he recreates in the (theatrically recreated) *Sousa*.

In the first stasimon of *Suppliants*, Aeschylus deploys vocal isolation to the opposite effect, creating not a sense of clarity, but rather of confusion. Where the vitality of the Greek war-cry in *Persians* underlined the stark contrast between the identity of the embedded speaker and that of the framing narrator lending voice to his utterance, in *Suppliants* the uncertainty surrounding the identity of the solitary embedded speaker serves to blur the boundary between past and present, between the internalized reenactment of quotation and the broader reenactment of the drama as a whole. The speech comes at the conclusion of the Chorus' account of their ancestor Io's many sufferings. In Egypt, where she is finally returned to human form, her physical transformation provokes reflection on the power of Zeus.

ἐνθεν πᾶσα βοᾷ χθών,
 'φυσιζόου γένος τόδε
 Ζηνός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς· 585
 τίς γὰρ ἂν κατέπαυσεν "Η-
 ρας νόσους ἐπιβούλους;
 Διὸς τόδ' ἔργον· καὶ τόδ' ἂν γένος λέγων
 ἐξ Ἑπάφου κυρήσας.

τίν' ἂν θεῶν ἐνδικωτέροισιν 590
 κεκλοίμαν εὐλόγως ἐπ' ἔργοις;
 <αὐτός ὁ> πατήρ φυτουργός αὐτόχειρ ἄναξ
 γένους παλαιόφρων μέγας
 τέκτων, τὸ πᾶν μῆχαρ, οὐρίος Ζεὺς.

(*Supp.* 583–95)

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*Then the whole land shouts “Truly this is the progeny
of life-giving Zeus. For who else could stop Hera’s
treacherous plagues? This is the work of Zeus, and calling
this progeny from Epaphus, you would hit the mark.
What god could I call to in praise for deeds more just?
He himself, the lord, the father created him with his own
hand, the great crafter of progeny, wise from his years, the
remedy of all, fair Zeus.*

The Chorus identify the speaker as the Egyptian earth (παῖσα χθών). Although the Chorus’ language is generally treated as a generalizing metonymy, signaling that the words are to be assigned a composite character or to the various members of the population, there is no reason not to take seriously a literal claim of speech from the land.⁴⁷ In light of *Suppliants*’ thematic focus on exile and repatriation, the attribution of a speaking voice to the land takes on an unusually pointed significance.⁴⁸ These possibilities are by no means mutually exclusive, and the uncertainty itself is a complement to the speaker’s dislocating isolation.

The indeterminacy with which the Egyptian speech begins is heightened by the striking omission of any concluding *inquit* frame (a technique that both Aeschylus and Pindar often employ and to which we will return in a moment). The effect here is to cast the precise length of the quotation into doubt. Without any clear indication from the text, modern editors have variously marked the conclusion of the speech after ἀληθῶς (585), ἐπιβούλους (586), and ἔργον (587), with little basis for preferring one option over another. The porous concluding boundary of the speech complements the initial uncertainty about the speaker’s identity, ensuring that a persistent sense of obscurity surrounds the embedded voice.

Throughout the passage there are suggestions of a dialogue that further complicate the matter. As with the attribution of speech to the land, the use of questions (τίς γάρ ἄν κατέπαυσεν

⁴⁷ Cf. Pindar O. 10.76–7 ἀείδετο δὲ πᾶν τέμενος τερπναῖσι θαλίαις τὸν ἐγκώμιον ἀμφὶ τρόπον.

⁴⁸ On the politics of the play, see Zeitlin 1990a, Zeitlin 1992, Bakewell 1997, Turner 2001–2, Bakewell 2013. On Greek views of Egypt, Froidefond 1971, Vasunia 2001: esp. 40–74 on *Supp.*

"Ἡρας νόσους ἐπιβούλους; 586, τίν' ἄν θεῶν ἐνδικωτέροισιν κεκλοίμαν εὐλόγως ἐπ' ἔργοις; 591) and the second person (καὶ τόδ' ἄν γένος λέγων ἐξ Ἐπάφου κυρήσαις 589) tend to be explained away by critics; the questions labeled rhetorical, the second-person an impersonal construction.⁴⁹ But taken together, it is hard not to hear something of a dialogue, even in a place where none should be. Again, the upshot is confusion about vocal identity. Are the Chorus quoting multiple speakers who have not been distinguished? Has a second embedded voice been subsumed into the amorphous πᾶσα χθών;⁵⁰ Is a single (composite) embedded speaker addressing itself? Or is the framing voice of the Chorus somehow seeking to engage with their embedded speaker? The persistent yet inconclusive sense of unacknowledged polyphony is, paradoxically, a direct result of the isolation of the embedded speech from an expected response. In the absence of conventional interlocutors, the boundaries of embedded speech become increasingly obscure.

The tendency to treat embedded speech in the singular, as an opportunity to hear lone voices deprived of their natural interlocutor, is a consistent feature throughout the works of Pindar and Aeschylus, one that sharply distinguishes their approach to the trope from that found in other poets. As these brief discussions demonstrate, the specific effects of this isolation vary greatly depending on context. Solitary speech itself is rarely marked out as programmatic in nature. Nevertheless, the consistency with which embedded voices are deprived of their natural and expected embedded response establishes a pattern of vocal expression that, once recognized, cannot be discounted. Taken on its own, this unusual fact might not amount to much. But, as we will see, this isolation of voice represents a critical foundation out of which Pindar and

⁴⁹ See the discussion of Friis Johansen and Whittle 1980: 475. The second-person impersonal or indefinite construction is attested elsewhere in Aeschylus (*Th.* 195, 719, *Supp.* 329, *Ag.* 252, 323, *Ch.* 1000), but it is sufficiently rare as to call its use here into some doubt.

⁵⁰ One can hear a kind of exchange in the balanced (imbalanced) pairing – the type of communal, gossiping voices so familiar from the iterative *tis*-speeches of Homer, cf. de Jong 1987.

Vocal Blending

Aeschylus develop the even more markedly atypical features of their embedded speech.

Vocal Blending

The isolation of embedded speakers from conventional embedded interlocutors opens up the possibility of placing their voices in a more unusual type of vocal community, one that blends the voice of the embedded speaker with that of his/her framing surrogate. Our discussions of Apollo's speech in Pindar's P. 3 and the collective voice of Egypt in Aeschylus' *Suppliants* have already touched briefly on this feature,⁵¹ exploring how the unusual isolation of embedded speakers is counterbalanced by an anachronistic reciprocity between framer and framed. Apollo's solitary speech finds echo in Pindar's prayer for immortality; the cry of the Egyptian land blends seamlessly into the questions of the Chorus who have given it voice. Drawing connections across temporal boundaries, Pindar and Aeschylus often blur the line between voices that conventional structures of narrative would segregate. Vocal blending between framer and framed finds some precedent in earlier works, such as Sappho's fr. 1, where Aphrodite's embedded speech emerges seamlessly from the voice of the poet's *oratio obliqua*. However, the degree to which Pindar and Aeschylus employ the technique seems to be exceptional in archaic poetry.⁵² In this section I consider this peculiar aspect of Pindar's and Aeschylus' embedded speech in more detail.

By contrast with the subtle linkages between the voices of P. 3, the embedded speech of Adrastus in Pindar's O. 6 overtly affirms the connections between an embedded voice and the speaker who quotes it. The speech, one of two in the poem, represents the most explicit reflection in either of our poets on the power of embedded speech to merge the framing speaker's

⁵¹ So too Felson Rubin 1984: 386–8 charts the close parallels between embedded speech of Pelops in O. 1 and the poem's narrator.

⁵² The absence of *inquit* frame at *Iliad* 1.17, for instance, was famously discussed in antiquity because of its divergence from the norm, Fantuzzi 1988: 47–59, cf. Nünlist 2009: 102–6, Currie 2013: 251 n. 46.

voice with those of others. Addressing his *laudandus*, Hagesias, early in the ode, Pindar uses embedded speech to impersonate the voice of the Argive hero Adrastus praising his fallen comrade, the seer Amphiaraus. The reason for the quotation, Pindar makes clear, is that the words once spoken by the mythical warrior are equally applicable for the poet as he praises Hagesias in the *here* and *now* of his epinician performance.

Ἀγησία, τιν δ' αἴνους ἑτοῖμος, ὃν ἐνδίκας
 ἀπὸ γλώσσας Ἄδραστος μάντιν Οἰκλεί-
 δαν ποτ' ἐς Ἀμφιάρηον
 φθέγγατ', ἐπεὶ κατὰ γαῖ' αὐ-
 τὸν τέ νιν καὶ φαιδίμας ἵππους ἔμαρψεν.
 ἑπτὰ δ' ἔπειτα πυρᾶν νε-
 κροῖς τελεσθέντων Ταλαϊονίδας 15
 εἶπεν ἐν Θήβαισι τοιοῦτόν τι ἔπος·
 'Ποθέω στρατιᾶς ὄφθαλμόν ἐμᾶς
 ἀμφοτέρων μάντιν τ' ἀγαθὸν καὶ
 δουρὶ μάρνασθαι.' τὸ καὶ
 ἀνδρὶ κώμου δεσπότη πάρεστι Συρακοσίῳ.
 (O. 6.12–18)

Hagesias, yours is that ready praise which Adrastus once spoke with just tongue to the seer, son of Oikles, Amphiaraus, when the earth had swallowed him and his glorious horses. When the seven pyres of dead had been consumed, the son of Talaus made such a speech in Thebes “I desire the eye of my army, both noble seer and spearman.” So likewise this [speech] befits this Syracusan man, ruler of the komos.

Motivating the quotation are the (only somewhat) parallel circumstances of the martial and moral virtue of the Argive seer, Amphiaraus, and the Syracusan victor, Hagesias, scion of a long line of prophets (a topic to which the ode later returns in detail).⁵³ The prophetic gifts of the fallen warrior are duly emphasized. But it is the voice of the hero Adrastus, who “spoke with just tongue,” on which the poet’s focus rests. The very fact of his speech – mentioned no fewer than three times in the short passage (αἴνους ἑτοῖμος (12), ἀπὸ γλώσσας ... φθέγγατ’

⁵³ Adorjani 2014: 36–7. On the Iamid line in general, Flower 2008, Hornblower 2012: 97–9, and its specific role in the structure of O. 6, Foster 2013.

13–14, εἶπεν ... τοιοῦτόν τι ἔπος 16) – is as important as its content.

Pindar turns to the warrior from the distant past to furnish him with words of praise for the victor in the present. He draws the equivalence in clear terms as he introduces the embedded speech: Adrastus' eulogy is equally applicable to you (τῖν), Hagesias. The conceit of "ready praise" (αἶνος ἐτοῖμος) points to the epic tradition from which these lines are adapted,⁵⁴ but it also signals Pindar's repurposing of Adrastus' speech to his own rather different ends. On the surface the passage contains two distinct voices, each grounded in its own temporal and spatial location. There is no lack of signposting, no ambiguity between the boundaries of speech. The poet speaks to his Syracusan *laudandus* in the *here* and *now* of his epinician celebration (where- and whenever that may be) while Adrastus addresses his departed comrade, Amphiarauus, in the Thebes of the distant past. But the overt parallelism prompts consideration of the ways in which the two speaking voices are merged into one. When the poet presents Adrastus' speech in *oratio recta*, not only does he convey the exact words of the ancient hero as if he were present to speak them himself,⁵⁵ he relies on that speech as a substitute for one he has crafted himself. Adrastus' voice, ventriloquized by the poet (and his performer(s)), stands in lieu of the poet's own. In the lines that follow, Pindar engages in an extended meditation on his own role as epinician singer, but offers little in the way of explicit praise of Hagesias.⁵⁶ There is no need to reprise or expand on the speech that has been revived from the past. Adrastus'

⁵⁴ Hutchinson 2001 *ad loc.*, Carne-Ross 1976: 10.

⁵⁵ Hutchinson 2001: 384 notes how "present and past are being strikingly juxtaposed and related," so too, Goldhill 1991: 149. The easy movement across broad swathes of time is, of course, not unusual for Pindar, who often uses the briefest mythologically significant mention – a place or a name – to shift his gaze from the *hic et nunc* of performance or composition to the distant past, see e.g. Bonifazi 2004b, Felson 2004b, Nünlist 2007. Here it is noteworthy that speech motivates the temporal shift. In fact, the narrative is little more than an elaborate *inquit* frame through which the poet emphasizes the verbal connection between the worlds.

⁵⁶ On the political motivations of the poem, see Foster 2013, Morgan 2015: 390–410.

embedded voice becomes a surrogate for the poet who quotes it; his just tongue suffices for both speakers alike.

If O. 6 merges two voices through the construction of an explicit relationship of surrogacy between embedded and framing speaker, a similar effect is achieved elsewhere through the absence of clearly delineated roles. Both Pindar and Aeschylus regularly achieve a blending of voices through the omission of a definitive *inquit* marker, particularly at the close of an embedded speech.⁵⁷ The use of *inquit* frames, phrases couched in formulaic language that remains more or less consistent across all forms of Greek poetry, is one of the most recognizable features of embedded speech. The outright elimination of this language calls attention to what might otherwise be thought of as a straightforward poetic device. In the absence of familiar framing language, embedded speech itself becomes more complicated, more alien. As it becomes more difficult to discern the exact boundaries between one voice and another, we begin to detect the complex operation of vocal surrogacy that undergirds the superficially simple relationship between framer and framed.⁵⁸ As we have already seen in Aeschylus' *Suppliants*, the absence of an *inquit* marker can allow a quoted voice to bleed into that of the framing speaker, not only blending the speakers' identities, but blurring the boundary between past and present. The first stasimon of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* presents another striking instance.

Singing of Helen's departure for Troy many years before, the chorus of Argive elders recall how the royal prophets foresaw the grief and despair that would result from her absence. The prophets' lament is related in embedded speech, vividly recreating that former moment of divine insight. The beginning of the quotation is marked by a traditionally phrased *inquit* frame, but there is no corresponding marker at the conclusion of the speech. The result is an uncertainty about precisely where the

⁵⁷ Pindar: O. 4.23–7 (discussed below 51–4), O. 6.15–18 (discussed above 44–6), 61–6, I. 8.26–45 (on which see Uhlig 2016: 120–2), *Pae.* 2.73–6 (discussed below 55–7); Aeschylus: *Supp.* 582–94 (discussed above 40–2), *Ag.* 409–31 (discussed here), *Ch.* 567–71, 575, *Eum.* 508–16, 756–61.

⁵⁸ Führer 1967: 32; de Jong 2009: 106.

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direct speech terminates and the Chorus resume speaking in their own voice.⁵⁹ I quote the passage in its entirety so as best to convey the scope of the ambiguity.

πολύ δ' ἀνέστενον	
τόδ' ἐννέποντες δόμων προφητῆαι·	
ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα καὶ πρόμοι,	410
ἰὼ λέχος καὶ στίβοι φιλόνορες.	
πάρεστι † σιγαῖς ἄτιμος ἀλοίδορος	
ἄδιστος ἀφεμένων † ἰδεῖν.	
πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας	
φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν.	415
εὐμόρφων δὲ κολοσσῶν	
ἔχθεται χάρις ἀνδρί,	
ὀμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχηνίας	
ἔρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα.	
ὄνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες	420
πάρεισι δόξαι φέρου-	
σαι χάριν ματαίαν.	
μάταν γάρ, εὖτ' ἂν ἐσθλὰ τις δοκοῦνθ' ὀρᾷ,	
παραλλάξασα διὰ	
χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις, οὐ μεθύστερον	425
πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦσ' ὕπνου κελεύθεις.	
τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους ἐφ' ἐστίας ἄχη	
τάδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τῶνδ' ὑπερβατώτερα·	
τὸ πᾶν δ' ἅφ' Ἑλλανος αἴας συνορμένοισι πέν-	
θεια τλησικάρδιος	430
δόμῳ ἕν ἐκάστου πρέπει.	

(Ag. 408–31)

With many groans, the prophets of the house spoke these words: "O house, o house and foremost men, o bed and husband-loving steps. He – dishonored, irreproachable, inexorable – can see the silence of those who have betrayed him. In his longing a specter of her, across the sea, will seem to rule the house. The grace of the well-formed sculptures is hateful to the husband, and all desire leaves the eyes of him in his deprivation.

*Mourning images come in dreams bearing pleasure in vain.
Yes vain, when someone sees things that seem good, but then
the vision slides away from his grasp, no longer on the winged*

⁵⁹ Athanassaki 1993–4: 161, Fletcher 1999: 33.

*paths that accompany sleep. These are the sorrows
at the hearth throughout the houses, and others even
greater than these. Heart-rending grief for those
who left from the land of Hellas is everywhere, evident in
every home.*

So intractable is the question of just where the quotation ends that modern editors reach wildly divergent conclusions. It is generally agreed that the quotation, which begins at line 410, must end after line 415 (where the future tense of δόξει only makes sense in the context of Helen's recent departure) and before line 427 (from which point the content refers to concerns of contemporary Argos, though this shift is only properly felt at 429). Between these two points, a range of more than ten full lines, there is no basis for selecting a terminus other than a subjective feel for sentence breaks and colometry.⁶⁰

The lack of concluding *inquit* frame produces an acute vocal ambiguity in this passage.⁶¹ The Chorus offer themselves as surrogates for the prophets of the past, lending their voice to the emotionally charged expressions (ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα) of that prior moment of grief. But in the *here* and *now* of their song, that grief has truly become their own. The first stasimon of the *Agamemnon*, like the parodos that precedes it,⁶² is a meditation on the past's legacy in the present: the consequences, and true cost, of Helen's departure for the city of Argos, where the youth who departed for war return as ashes in urns (442–4). The *prophetai*, viewed from the retrospective vantage of the Chorus, were able to see the significance of Helen's departure before anyone else. Now, their once-prophetic vision is shared by the Chorus, who know all too clearly the

⁶⁰ Most modern editors place the break at the end of 426 (so Mazon, Fraenkel, Page, Bollack, West, Sommerstein), but Murray opts for 415, and one even finds 419 in Campbell's 1893 translation. Paley thought that the quotation did not even reach to 415, and placed its conclusion at the end of 411, while Wilamowitz omitted speech markers entirely. Bers 1997: 37 suggests that the direct speech does not continue past 419, while confessing to "claim no great confidence in [his] reasoning." Athanassaki 1993–4: 150 argues in favor of more expansive boundaries.

⁶¹ Athanassaki 1993–4 argues for a corresponding geographic ambiguity. Just as Helen has moved from Argos to Troy, so the position of the *prophetai* cannot be conclusively determined.

⁶² On the *Agamemnon* parodos, see below 66–80.

price that Menelaus' longing has exacted from the people of Argos. The overlap between the voices of prophets past and Chorus present corresponds to the subtle shift from language that specifically describes the suffering of Menelaus (ἰὼ λέχος 411, πόθῳ δ' ὑπερποντίας 414, ὁμμάτων δ' ἐν ἀχηνίαις ἔρρει πᾶσ' Ἀφροδίτα 418–19) to generalizations that might well be applied to the grieving families of those lost at war (ὄνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες πάρεισι δόξαι 420–1, τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκου ἐφ' ἐστίας ἄχῃ 426). As the suffering once prophesied has come to pass, spreading woe well beyond the royal bedchamber, the Chorus can join their voice with those of the *prophetai*. The sorrow and despair that the prophets once foretold has now become the lament of the Chorus as well.

The frequent blending of voice across the boundaries of embedded speech is directly tied to the consistent isolation of embedded speakers in Pindar and Aeschylus. Without conventionally situated interlocutors, these voices find dialogue in unexpected quarters. But this dialogue does not follow the usual arithmetic of one plus one. Instead we find vocal multiplication and division: voices layered over other voices in reduplicated harmonies; voices split between self and impersonated other. Speech is refracted back through and onto speech. Voice is delimited by the space shared with another voice. From the relatively simple observation that Pindar and Aeschylus tend to avoid dialogue in embedded speech, a more unfamiliar and intriguing model of voice begins to take shape.

Temporal Confusion and Concern

One of the primary effects of Pindar's and Aeschylus' approach to embedded speech is to upend the temporal relationship between the voices of framer and framed.⁶³ As the

⁶³ A great deal of scholarship has been devoted to the subject of time in Pindar, see esp. Vivante 1972, Hurst 1985, Griffith 1993, Mackie 2003, Pavlou 2011. Less explicit attention has been paid to this question in Aeschylus, but see Chiasson 1999, Bergerard 2006, Revermann 2008, Kyriakou 2011, Griffiths 2014. The approaches of both poets to the past are juxtaposed in Grethlein 2010. On archaic Greek approaches to time more broadly, see Darbo-Peschanski 2000, with bibliography.

conventional boundaries between speakers are effaced, the temporal structures on which those boundaries rely are weakened and overturned. Adrastus' "ready praise" is made to serve in the present as the speaker's voice is resurrected from the distant past. The visions of the *prophetai* at the outset of the Trojan war blend into the present reality of the *Agamemnon* Chorus at its close (a temporal juxtaposition that is developed even more deeply, as we will soon see, in the parodos of that same play). It is through an appreciation of this temporal dynamic that the distinctive character of Pindar's and Aeschylus' embedded voices begins to come more fully into focus.

Embedded speech always touches on questions of temporality to some degree, insofar as it permits voices from another time to be heard (as if) speaking in the present. Verbatim quotation reenacts a speech from the past, bringing the *here* and *now* of the embedded speaker momentarily into alignment with the *here* and *now* of the framing performance. Homer capitalizes on this very semblance of temporal proximity when he addresses certain of his embedded speakers in the second person.⁶⁴ In the poetry of Pindar and Aeschylus, however, the frequency with which embedded speeches are temporally thematized, and the intense degree to which temporal themes are developed, singles out the relationship between voice and time as a source of heightened interest.

The temporality of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus is as much a question of content as of form. Charged meditations on time, whether considerations of the past or, more often, prophetic utterances about the future, comprise a disproportionate number of the embedded speeches in the work of both poets.⁶⁵ The consistent pairing of temporally

⁶⁴ On the temporal dynamics of performance in Homer, see esp. Bakker 1997b, Bakker 2005.

⁶⁵ Pindar: O. 6.16–17; O. 6.62–3; O. 8.42–6; O. 13.67–9; P. 3.40–2; P. 4.13–57; P. 8.44–55; P. 9.30–6, 39–65; N. 10.76–9, 80–8; I. 6.43–9, 52–4; I. 8.35_a–45, Hymn fr. 43 SM, Paean. 2.73–5, Paean. 4.39–?, Paean. 8a.14–?. It is possible that Erginus' speech in O. 4 should also be included in this list, as argued by Suarez de la Torre 1988: 90. The voice of the prophet in Pindar's epinicians is treated at length by Athanassaki 1990. See also Suarez de la Torre 1988, Suarez de la Torre 1989, Suarez de la Torre 1990, Dickson 1990, Schmid 1996: 46–57. Aeschylus: *Th.* 580–9 (434, 647–8 speaking

explicit content in temporally charged embedded speeches that one finds in the works of Pindar and Aeschylus is not matched elsewhere in our extant sources.⁶⁶ Deployed in this way, embedded speech becomes a site for considering the temporality of voice; of the ways in which vocal expression is shaped by, but also shapes, a perception of time.

The multifaceted temporal thematization of embedded speech is nicely illustrated by the subtle sophistication of Pindar's O. 4, a deft little poem consisting of a sole triad.⁶⁷ Midway through the brief song, Pindar introduces a mythical excursus about the minor Argonaut hero, Erginus. The narration details the aftermath of an athletic competition, an otherwise unattested episode during the Argonauts' eventful stopover on the island of Lemnos, in which Erginus won a victory in an armed footrace. Despite his athletic success, Erginus is insulted by the Lemnian women and responds with a bold speech; proving his worth a second time, now with words rather than deeds.

οὐ ψεύδεϊ τέγξω
λόγον· διάπειρά τοι βροτῶν ἔλεγχος·

ἄπερ Κλυμέναιο παῖδα
Λαμνιάδων γυναικῶν ἔλυσεν ἐξ ἁτιμίας. 20
χαλκείοισι δ' ἐν ἔντεσι νικῶν δρόμον
ἔειπεν Ὑψιπυλείᾳ μετὰ στέφανον ἰών·
'οὔτος ἐγὼ ταχυτᾶτι·
χεῖρες δὲ καὶ ἦτορ ἴσον· φύονται δὲ καὶ νέοις 25
ἐν ἀνδράσιν πολιαί
θαμάκι παρὰ τὸν ἀλικίας ἐοικότα χρόνον.'
(O. 4.17–27)

I will not wet my speech with falsehood, for refutation is the true test of men.

shields), *Ag.* 126–55, 206–17, 410–26. To this may be added the various instances of proleptic direct speech: *Supp.* 402, *Ch.* 569–70, 575, 718, *Eum.* 757–60, and fr. 78a24 (*Theoroi*), on which see below 50–60. On prophetic speech in Aeschylus, see Peradotto 1969, Adrados 1989, Roberts 1984.

⁶⁶ Note, by contrast, that the temporal inversions in Bacch. 16 are effected through embedded speech that does not itself explicitly thematize chronology, on which see Uhlig 2017.

⁶⁷ Gerber 1987, Mader 1990: 15–58, Schmitz 1994, Nicholson 2011.

Voices of Others: Embedded Speech

For it was this very thing that freed the son of Clymenos from the dishonor of the Lemnian women. Having won the footrace in his bronze armor, he said to Hypsipyle as he came to receive his crown "I am indeed swift, and no less are my hands and heart. Often gray hairs grow upon the heads of young men before the suitable time of life."

The passage clearly displays the vocal blending and isolation that are characteristic of Pindar's and Aeschylus' use of embedded speech. Although Erginus' words are directed at Hypsipyle and the Lemnian women, his voice is heard in isolation. And, in a gesture familiar from his quotation of Adrastus in O. 6, Pindar identifies the hero's verbal achievement as an explicit model for his own poetic practice before adopting Erginus' voice as (or in place of) his own.⁶⁸

Formally, the embedded speech calls our attention to its temporal peculiarities at beginning and end. The introductory framing language establishes a contrasting chronology of the two speakers through a juxtaposition of tenses: Pindar speaks of his own voice in the future tense (τέγξω),⁶⁹ while setting Erginus' exemplary vocal feat in the aorist (ἔλυσεν, ἔειπεν). Even as the hero's speech moves momentarily into the present through the embedded quotation, a temporal distance mediates the merging of his voice with that of the poet who impersonates it. The uncertain relationship between framer and framed is thematized again at the close of the poem, where – uniquely in extant archaic poetry – the embedded voice of Erginus is the last thing that is heard.⁷⁰ The effect is clearly related to that found in other instances where a concluding *inquit* formula is omitted: the past, made vividly

⁶⁸ Mader 1990: 54 observes that the poet's identification with the speech of an athletic victor mirrors his widespread appropriation of athletic language in metaphors of poetic production (on which see Steiner 1986: 111–21). Less convincing is Schmid 1996: 116, who contends that Pindar is here speaking from the perspective of his *laudandus*. On the Homeric models of the ode, see Sotiriou 2016.

⁶⁹ The verb picks up on his earlier wish that Psauimis' future prayers meet with divine favor: θεός εὐφρων / εἴη λοιπαῖς εὐχαῖς (13–14).

⁷⁰ The usage does find some parallel in mythical narratives that abruptly end in the voice of an embedded speaker, a particular feature of Bacchylides (5.175, 13.75, 15.63), also cf. *Supp.* 583–9, O. 6.17, see Führer 1967: 45–65.

present through embedded speech, intrudes upon and unsettles our understanding of the voice of the framing speaker.⁷¹ By aligning this vocal uncertainty with the termination of the poem, Pindar allows the embedded voice from past to inhabit present without qualification.

The temporal uncertainty produced by the presence of Erginus' embedded voice within the poem finds further confirmation in the content of his words, which hinge on the fundamental unreliability of human perceptions of time. In his response to Hypsipyle, Erginus concedes that he may seem old because his hair is gray, but his body has the strength and speed of youth.⁷² Erginus' speech is meant to highlight the hero's youthful vigor, as proved by his athletic achievements. But his message may be extended to Pindar's choral *erga* as well, especially the vitality of his own voice, made perpetually young through its resurrection in embedded speech. The content of the embedded speech is thus an analogue to its formal function within the poem. Within the frame of the mythical narrative, Erginus insists that his youth has been proved by his speed in the footrace. From the perspective of the ode as a whole, Erginus' voice has exposed a different type of falsely perceived old age; while his words might seem to belong to the distant past, they can be heard being spoken in the here and now. As with Erginus' hair, the semblance of his speech's age is belied by the evidence of what it has achieved. This subtle temporal play through embedded speech, layering voice over voice to upend conventional appearances of chronology, picks up on themes that have been at the forefront of O. 4 from the poet's opening invocation of the turning (dancing?) seasons (ὦρραι ἐλίσσόμεναι 1–2).⁷³ Now, at the poem's abrupt conclusion,

⁷¹ Confirming the strong effect of vocal blending achieved by this abrupt conclusion, Gerber 1987: 23 notes that “doubts are occasionally expressed about whether this final sentence [of O. 4] is part of the direct speech or a comment by the poet.”

⁷² Although the exact nature of the insult remains unarticulated, Erginus seems to be responding to the Lemnian women's scorn for his age; Mader 1990: 53–6.

⁷³ As Gerber 1987: 10–11 rightly notes, the *Horae* are depicted as dancers who sent the poet to the victor.

the final word, spoken by the revived voice of the long-dead Argonaut is χρόνον.

Erginus' speech in O. 4 asks us to consider the distortions and misprisions that attend mankind's limited understanding of time from the perspective of a speaker entirely beholden to these limits. Far more commonly, however, Pindar and Aeschylus turn to voices of prophecy – a variety of speech that by definition unsettles the conventional structures of human chronology – to activate the temporal reconfigurations of embedded speech. As we have already seen in the case of the *prophetai* of the *Agamemnon*, the forward-looking gaze of the prophet can transgress the limits of traditional context, projecting a voice from the past into the future of its own description. Variations on this mirroring technique are found with some frequency in the works of both poets. A voice from the past is embedded within the very future that has been foretold. The proleptic speech of the embedded speaker finds perfect symmetry in the retrospective narrator of the framing surrogate. Through such deliberately framed impersonations of prophetic voices, Pindar and Aeschylus are able to construct temporal puzzles that expose the unorthodox temporalities that facilitate such layering of voice upon voice.

Pindar's strong identification with prophetic speakers has long been recognized by scholars,⁷⁴ and the distinctive temporality of prophecy is critical to the way that both he and Aeschylus deploy embedded speech. While prophets tend to be cast as the embedded voices of these passages, they also share a number of significant features with the framers of embedded speech. Like the framer of an embedded speech, the prophet is able to inhabit multiple temporal positions at once. Looking forward to an otherwise unknown future, or backwards to a past at which he or she was not present, the prophet stands as an analogue for the temporally capacious framing voice, who is able to access voices from another time and place. Both prophet and framer serve as surrogates, speaking with a voice

⁷⁴ The classic treatment of Pindar's "prophetic" poetry is Duchemin 1956, more recently Mackie 2003: 80–8 and Maslov 2015: 186–200.

not entirely their own. They conjure what should be elsewhere into presence, using their own bodies as a medium through which to bring past and future into the present.

Composed for the city of Abdera, Paean 2 is an odd poem. It offers a catalogue of martial victories, past and future, cast within the frame of a repeated ritual refrain (ἰὴ ἰὲ Παιάν, ἰὴ ἰὲ· Παιάν δὲ μήποτε λείποι *le ie Paian, ie ie, may Paian never leave* 35–6, 71–2, 107–8). The ritual language has inspired scholarship focused almost exclusively on the song’s presumed performance context and function in Abdera.⁷⁵ At the same time, the ritual language that segments the poem is paired with a fluid, and at times contradictory temporal structure that poses significant challenges to comprehension, let alone interpretation.⁷⁶ This cultivated instability finds its most emphatic expression at the beginning of the third triad, when an unanticipated – and unannounced – embedded speech unsettles the temporal frame through the introduction of Hecate’s prophetic voice. As part of a broader approach to embedded speech, Hecate’s intervention can be understood as an articulation of Pindar’s and Aeschylus’ model of vocal temporality. Although Hecate’s speech may not be marked as programmatic within Paean 2, it can nevertheless serve a heuristic function for the modern scholar, demarcating the self-referential quality of the song’s pervasive thematization of time.

Abdera itself is a temporal paradox in the poem: a newly founded city (νεόπολις εἰμι 28) whose present and future fortune are repeatedly linked to the glorious past of its mythical founding (an event that historians tell us took place only two centuries before Pindar’s time). Past, present, and future are decidedly uncertain territory and it is often difficult to situate oneself within the song’s topsy-turvy temporal landscape. Jarring shifts from one chronological frame to the next are made without warning. The city of Abdera looks with trepidation to the future, where its greatest glories still await (26–7, 104–6). Yet

⁷⁵ Graham 1992, Rutherford 2001: 264–75, Athanassaki 2003.

⁷⁶ The fragmentary nature of the poem undeniably contributes to the confusion for modern readers, but the unsettled quality to which I refer here stems from narrative passages that are substantially preserved.

the desire to slip into the past is equally strong, as reflected by the numerous apostrophes to the mythical founder, Abderus, and the paradoxical chronology that allows one to move back to a time before one's birth (28–9). Battles won in the past blend into those of the future; each enabled by the god to whom the refrain is sung: Παιάν δὲ μήποτε λείποι. Within this unsettled temporal structure, the rhythmically repeated prayer is yet another way of marking time, grounding the disparate temporalities of the multiple narratives within the pattern of its performative utterance; each time insistently present, each time a repetition of what has gone before, each time a presage of what is to come.

The introduction of yet another voice, another temporal vantage, is signaled by an unexpected future tense following the second ritual refrain. The words are a prophecy that foretells yet another martial victory for the Abderites. The success of a warrior – unidentified in the poem but perhaps well known to its audience⁷⁷ – is foretold in embedded speech. The truth of the prediction is quickly confirmed by the framing speaker, who attributes the quoted words to the goddess Hecate.

ἀλλὰ μιν ποταμῷ σχεδὸν μολόντα φύρσει
 βαιοῖς σὺν ἔντεσιν
 ποτὶ πολὺν στρατόν· ἐν δὲ μηνὸς
 75
 πρῶτον τύχην ἄμαρ·
 ἄγγελλε δὲ φοινικώπεζα λόγον παρθένος
 εὐμενῆς Ἑκάτα
 τὸν ἐθέλοντα γενέσθαι.

(Pae. 2.73–9)

*But, bearing his light arms, he will tangle with a great army
 that comes close by the river. It was the first day of the
 month and the red-footed virgin, kindly Hecate announces
 the word that wishes to belbecome.*

Coming immediately on the heels of the ritual refrain that marks the end of each of the poem's triads, the introduction of the embedded speech is strikingly abrupt. There is no *inquit* marker at its start, just a shift in tense that signals a new perspective. It is not until the conclusion of the prophecy

⁷⁷ See the discussion of Rutherford 2001: 271–4.

that its status as embedded speech is confirmed.⁷⁸ Although Pindar and Aeschylus often omit concluding *inquit* frames, the absence of an opening *inquit* poses an even greater challenge in distinguishing voices. The embedded speech is in keeping with the temporal disposition of the poem as a whole. A striking shift in tense – present to future – a pivot in perspective – from present to past. And back again. The framing voice resituates the battle of Hecate’s prophetic speech: not something to look forward to, but an event whose outcome has already been settled. Pindar’s description of Hecate’s speech matches the voice itself. Hecate, the framing voice proclaims, speaks a speech that desires to be (λόγον ... τὸν ἐθέλοντα γενέσθαι). The import of the phrase is not immediately apparent. It seems to refer both to the need for the speech’s articulation (a desire for the words to be spoken) and also to the necessity of fulfilling the prophetic content of the speech (that the speech become deed, enacted by the unnamed warrior). Both interpretations fit the circumstances well, and this compatibility of multiple perspectives itself echoes the distinct vocal temporalities brought into view (or rather, hearing) by the embedded speech. At a moment when Hecate’s use of the future tense has drawn our attention to the song’s layering of voice over voice, we are invited to consider a single statement from two contrasting temporal vantages. From the viewpoint of the embedded speaker, Hecate’s speech will “become” in the future as it is fulfilled on the battlefield. But for the framing singer, who gives it voice anew in his song, it will also “become” through its renewal in performance – a prophetic corollary to the repeated ritual refrain.

If Hecate’s embedded speech offers a model of the alternating temporal perspectives that characterize Paean 2 as a whole, the return to the voice of the framing speaker – a voice whose own identity is left somewhat uncertain throughout the song – suggests an even more pointed reflection on the

⁷⁸ Currie 2013: 255–6. Rutherford 2001: 274 acknowledges that “the purpose of the hyperbaton would be to produce the effect of abruptness that seems to have been usual at the start of a new triad,” but then rejects the suggestion that the words of the prophecy are indeed an embedded speech from the past.

poem's shifting perspectives in the wake of the words of the goddess. Before our text breaks off, Pindar marks a transition away from Hecate's prophecy with what seems to be an explicit mention of the poet's own art: $\nu\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ δ' $\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}$ $\gamma[\lambda]\upsilon\kappa\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\chi\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$ (*and now, again, sweet-devised ...* 80).⁷⁹ The strong temporal markers of the transition – *and now again* – reflect the dual tendencies towards disruption ($\nu\tilde{\iota}\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ δ') and continuity ($\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}$) that characterize the relationship between the poem's disparate voices and perspectives. Each inhabits a distinct moment in time, yet they blend into each other, reviving and repeating what has come before, looking to the future for yet another iteration.

Before concluding this preliminary overview, it is necessary to take note of one final variety of temporally charged embedded speech that is found in the works of Aeschylus and not in those of Pindar. On five distinct occasions, Aeschylus has one of his characters give voice to a proleptic embedded speech; rather than revive a voice from the past (as is the case in all other instances of embedded speech in our poets), these speakers impersonate a voice from the (imagined or foretold) future.⁸⁰ These proleptic embedded speeches retain the temporal characteristics – of iteration and blending of now with then – found throughout both Pindar and Aeschylus. The chronology, however, inverts the standard structure. Where embedded speech normally stands in the past relative to the framing speaker, here the framing speaker predicts (and preempts) a voice not yet heard in the future. By inverting the chronological relationship of framing and embedded speaker, Aeschylus finds yet another way to call the temporality of voice into question.

⁷⁹ Rutherford 2001: 273, noting that “ $\gamma[\lambda]\upsilon\kappa\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\chi\alpha\nu\omicron\nu$ almost certainly refers to poetry,” suggests that Pindar drew a parallel between Hecate's prophecy of future victory and the martial aims of his own song.

⁸⁰ Instances of proleptic embedded speech in Aeschylus are *Supp.* 402, *Ch.* 569–75 (on which see below), 718, *Eum.* 757–60, and fr. 78a24 (*Theoroi*). The technique is perhaps borrowed from Homer, cf. *Iliad* 4.176, a “speech in speech” where Agamemnon imagines what will be said at his brother's grave; 6.459, Hector imagines the words that will be said about his wife after his death; 7.87, Hector imagines what will be said at his victim's grave. It is noteworthy that the embedded speeches of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, discussed above, are also proleptic.

Although not prophetic *per se*, this proleptic form of embedded speech displays similarities to the prophetic disposition since the framing speaker is imbued with a type of prophetic power insofar as he or she claims to foretell events of the future. In their seemingly active manipulation of future speech, these predictive quotations allow Aeschylus to reflect on the way that the voices in his poems reprise what has been said before. A striking example is found in *Choephoroi*, where Orestes, plotting the murder of his mother, ventriloquizes words that he expects to hear when he makes his way to the palace.

καὶ δὴ θυρωρῶν οὕτις ἂν φαιδρᾷ φρενὶ 565
 δέξαιτ', ἐπειδὴ δαίμονα δόμος κακοῖς·
 μενούμεν οὕτως ὥστ' ἐπεικάζειν τινὰ
 δόμους παραστείχοντα καὶ τάδ' ἐννέπειν·
 'τί δὴ πύλῃσι τὸν ἰκέτην ἀπείργεται 570
 Αἰγισθος, εἴπερ οἶδεν ἐνδημος παρών;
 εἰ δ' οὖν ἀμείψω βαλὼν ἐρκείων πυλῶν
 κάκεῖνον ἐν θρόνοισιν εὐρήσω πατρός,
 ἢ καὶ μολῶν ἔπειτά μοι κατὰ στόμα
 ἔρεῖ· σάφ' ἴσθι, καὶ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς καλεῖν,
 πρὶν αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν 'ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος;' νεκρὸν 575
 θήσω, ποδώκει περιβαλὼν χαλκεύματι.

(Ch. 565–76)

And if none of the doormen receive us with a welcoming mind, since the house is possessed by evils, we will wait so that someone passing by the house may wonder and say "Why does Aigisthus keep this suppliant outside his door, if he is at home and knows of the situation?" But if I enter into the palace gates and find that man on the throne of my father, or if arriving he speaks to me, know this, that laying eyes on him, before he can say "What country is the stranger from?" I will kill him, embracing him with swift bronze.

Orestes is, in a sense, giving voice to a script for future performance.⁸¹ He pre-performs the dialogue,⁸² imagining the possible reactions to his arrival and anticipating through his own speech the voices that he will soon encounter. Nor

⁸¹ See Ringer 1998: 8 on metatheatrical "scripting" by characters in tragedy.

⁸² On preperformance in Pindar, see Budelmann 2017.

does Orestes have to wait long to find his vocal prediction made good. Upon approaching the palace, the young exile, now concealing his own voice in the guise of a Phocian stranger,⁸³ finds his words echoed back to him in the voice of the *oiketēs*: εἶεν, ἀκούω· ποδαπὸς ὁ ξένος; πόθεν; (657). The circumstance is slightly different than forecast, but the words are a verbatim repetition of Orestes' earlier embedded speech. The same question, set at the same point in the trimeter, now voiced not by Orestes impersonating his fantasy of Aigisthus, but by the slave who has answered the door in his stead. The exact repetition represents a type of vocal blending akin to that found between framer and framed in embedded speech proper. And as with those more familiar forms of embedded speech, questions of chronology are at the heart of the vocal duplication. Just as retrospective quotations invite the past to take up residence in the present, blurring the line between *then* and *now*, so too Orestes' anticipatory speech anchors the present uneasily within a future which it helps to shape without fully controlling.

Conclusion

The distinctive structure of embedded speech in the poetry of Pindar and Aeschylus, as outlined in this chapter, marks out a particular notion of voice. The disposition is characterized by unexpected isolation and equally irregular connections, by temporal recursions and anachronistic harmonies. With each atypical feature that they apply to the normally straightforward poetic device, Pindar and Aeschylus invite us to consider the remarkable assumptions that underpin its use. The atypicality of individual instances may be felt to a greater or lesser degree, but the overall pattern, once recognized, can help us train our ears to certain harmonies that exist between the songs of Pindar and Aeschylus. These poets' unusual – and unusually shared – approach asks us to reflect on these voices

⁸³ On Orestes' disguise, see below 188–90.

Conclusion

that are able to make their way into the vivid present despite the fact that they are not “really” there.

The pervasive penchant for blending the voices of framer and framed underscores the vocal surrogacy that facilitates embedded quotations. In order for the embedded speech to be heard, the framer must become a vocal medium (a channel or instrument) for someone else. He or she must give voice, in the most literal of senses, to an embedded speaker from another time and place. In so doing, embedded speech creates a vocal excess; two voices where there should only be one. For Pindar and Aeschylus, the exposure of this uncanny calculus seems to stem from a profound interest in the complex relationship between voice and identity.

The temporal thematization that attends so many of Pindar’s and Aeschylus’ embedded speeches helps to situate the present (of speech, voice, identity) within a complex framework of overlapping pasts and futures. Just as the voices of embedded speech are both *now* and *then*, *here* and *there*, so the temporal landscape that they create is one in which the present is not a singular thing. Voice, as imagined by the embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus, is something that can return in and to the present; something that makes *then* “*now*”, *he* “*I*”, *there* “*here*”, without ever fully effacing either element.

Pindar and Aeschylus ask us to contemplate the essential act of replication and surrogacy on which embedded speech is founded. These characteristics may be more or less strongly felt in any given manifestation of this common poetic device. But the consistency with which Pindar and Aeschylus draw our attention to temporal inversions, vocal conflations, and identity confusions, transforms their use of embedded speech – infrequently and precisely deployed – into a self-conscious reflection on the nature of the poetic voice. Understood in this way, the embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus emerge as analogues of choral performance itself. These internal voices, consciously framed as vocal imitations, provide perhaps the clearest (if not the most overtly marked) model of how these two poets conceive of their own mimetic art. Embedded speech is a microcosm of choral song itself. It is a way for the poets

to make visible – or rather, audible – the contours (though certainly not the totality) of the theatrical space in which their songs come to life.⁸⁴

Voice, of course, is not all there is to performance in Pindar and Aeschylus, but the model of vocal surrogacy that they develop in their distinctive approach to embedded speech will serve as a guide to the ways that they approach non-vocal elements of performance as well. The basic structures explored in this chapter will serve as the framework for the readings that I develop later in this book; a stage door, as it were, into the space of Pindar and Aeschylus' theater. But before broadening the picture beyond voice, I will take a bit more time in the [next chapter](#) to consider how thinking about choral performance through the lens of embedded speech can shed light on two famously challenging passages.

⁸⁴ In a similar spirit, Derrida 1989: 31, speaking of the effect of embedded speech on readers, observes that the visual form of quotation marks “lends itself to theatricalization, and also to the hallucination of the stage and its machinery: two pairs of pegs hold in suspension a sort of drapage, a veil or a curtain.”

CHAPTER 2

ANACHRONISTIC HARMONIES

AGAMEMNON PARODOS, PYTHIAN 4

Embedded speech, at least as deployed in the poetry of Pindar and Aeschylus, invites us to think about the mechanics of voice. It has the ability to restructure and unsettle our expectations about how speech, and by extension song, makes itself heard. In the [last chapter](#) I offered a schematic overview of the three distinctive characteristics of embedded speeches in Pindar and Aeschylus: the isolation of the embedded speaker, the blending of framing and embedded voice, and the pointed unsettling of temporal structures and foregrounding of prophetic themes. The consistent recourse to these features, I suggested, is symptomatic of a deeper sympathy between these two poets.

Embedded speech, viewed in this way, is part-and-parcel of a larger disposition – towards choral song, towards performance, towards the theater – that finds expression in the work of these two poets. The aim of this book is to offer an account, preliminary and partial though it may be, of this shared outlook. Subsequent chapters will explore other forms through which Pindar and Aeschylus give voice to their interest in theatrical recursion and reenactment. My decision to begin with an examination of embedded speech stems not from any essential quality that is present (or more purely expressed) in this device compared to others. Rather, the choice is heuristically motivated. Because of its infrequent use by Pindar and Aeschylus, the relative ease with which instances can be identified, and, most importantly, the striking consistency with which Pindar and Aeschylus apply their unconventional version of the device, embedded speech can quickly establish the basic coordinates of the shared space that is being mapped out here, even if (or

perhaps especially because) it offers only a provisional and lacunose account of the topography.

The questions of voice that emerge from an examination of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus are only one facet of a broader discourse of performance. It will be the goal of subsequent chapters to sketch out some of the associated dimensions of their choral imagination. But before broadening the scope of inquiry, it is necessary to linger a bit longer with our embedded voices. To ask how these moments of speech-in-speech help us to better grasp Pindar's and Aeschylus' distinct approach to choral song. If the schematic overview set out in the [previous chapter](#) gave us a general sense of how Pindar's and Aeschylus' notion of voice differs from that of other poets, the detailed readings that will occupy us here are intended to put some flesh on those bones.

I take up two passages, one from each poet: the parodos of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* and the opening narrative of Pindar's P. 4. Both of these passages contain embedded speeches that exemplify the three features of Pindar's and Aeschylus' distinctive use of the device. But the complex and lengthy embedded speeches in these passages take the basic model to the extreme. Indeed, at thirty and forty-five lines, respectively, the embedded speeches explored in this chapter are the longest speeches and represent the most elaborate and sophisticated manipulation of the device found in the extant works of either poet. They epitomize the conscious deployment of embedded speech as a means of reflecting on choral performance. Each creates an intricate soundscape through the conspicuous layering of distinct, yet overlapping, voices. The anachronistic harmonies invite us to consider how structures of surrogacy enable voices of the past to return to the present and voices of the present to blend into the past.

Embedded speech is a citational practice. It calls voice into being. It affirms the reality of something thought to exist elsewhere by summoning it into the *here* and *now*. It recreates in the present speech that normally (normatively) inhabits a time and place outside of the present. Pindar and Aeschylus exploit

this citational capacity of embedded speech to restructure the present in which these voices emerge. The voices of embedded speech in these poets, though isolated, are never singular. As the embedded voices of their compositions move in and across time, Pindar and Aeschylus redefine the temporal parameters of their songs. But embedded speech is not simply a temporal conduit – an internal analogue for the cosmic wormhole of choral performance. Like a prism, embedded speech transforms what passes through it. It is a device that splits and expands. It doubles and at the same time conflates voice. One voice becomes two (framer and framed); two voices are held in one (framer impersonating the speech of another). This reduplicative capacity is equally central to the way that Pindar and Aeschylus make use of embedded speech. The temporal puzzles that our two poets construct cannot be understood without considering questions of identity. *Who* is speaking becomes as critical a concern as *when*.

Cast in such a light – as a meditation on the recreation of voice and identity across time – embedded speech becomes a paradigm of performance itself. Its insistently iterative disposition, drawing attention to the creation of a present through the quotation (citation, renewal) of the past, aligns it with the type of overtly self-conscious reenactment that Rebecca Schneider has identified in certain contemporary (i.e. twentieth- and twenty-first-century) practices that seek to expose and explore what she has called the temporal *fold* or *crease* of theatrical performance.¹ Despite their manifest differences, these ancient and contemporary approaches evince a kindred interest in repetition that is borne out in the foregrounding of forms that loop back on themselves and unsettle traditional linear structures of time.

Performance, viewed in this way, is an event in which the *here* and *now* cannot be disentangled from *there* and *then*. It falls, as Schneider explains, under the uncertain rubric of the “not *not*.” In the theater, performers are not *not* themselves, and not *not* someone else. Their actions are not *not* of the present, but

¹ Schneider 2011: 89.

also not *not* of the past; not *not* a reprisal of something already done. In the poetry of Pindar and Aeschylus, embedded speech stands as a paradigm of this recursive and involute temporality. It allows us to hear a voice that is not *not* that of the framing speaker and not *not* that of the embedded figure whom he or she impersonates; not *not* spoken in the *here* and *now* of choral performance, but not *not* situated in an entirely different moment as well. The embedded speeches of Pindar and Aeschylus deliberately showcase the interweaving of vocal layers, and in so doing they draw the uneasy coexistence of seemingly incompatible perspectives, identities, moments into the open.

Anachronistic Harmonies

There is no better example of the way that embedded speech draws attention to the vocal layering of choral poetry than the *Agamemnon* parodos, the melic tour-de-force with which Aeschylus begins his *Oresteia* trilogy. In this extended lyric ode noteworthy for its complex structure, intricate colometry, and sophisticated figurative language, the chorus of Argive elders relate the events that took place ten years earlier when the Achaean fleet marshaled at Aulis, leading ultimately to the sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenia. The parodos is unique amongst tragic lyric for its inclusion of two lengthy embedded speeches. First from the Argive seer Calchas (126–55) interpreting the dire implications of an avian portent and, significantly later, another from Agamemnon (205–17) expressing his dismay at the choice that has been set him.² The two embedded speeches exemplify the key features surveyed in the last section: unusual isolation of the embedded speaker, blending of voice across formal barriers, temporal reconfigurations and prophetic content. All three facets are deployed in concert to produce a deliberate, and unusually protracted meditation on the nature of voice and its critical role within choral performance.

² Schein 2009: 394, Grethlein 2013: 79.

From its place at the start of the *Oresteia* trilogy, the *Agamemnon* parodos takes on an undeniably programmatic function, setting out many of the critical themes that will be worked out as the trilogy unfolds.³ The ode's challenging thematization of language has been well explored in the seminal works of Lebeck and Goldhill.⁴ My interest here is to delve into the kindred, yet distinct, concern with voice that is mapped out in the parodos, and which Aeschylus continues to develop throughout the trilogy. Voice, unlike language, cannot be understood outside of a temporal framework (however tacit or murky) of expression (i.e. performance). Over and above the (conceptually challenging) semantic content of what is said, the embedded speeches of the *Agamemnon* parodos are structured in such a way as to highlight the underlying complexity of voice itself. They bring into sharp focus mechanisms of vocal surrogacy that normally remain obscured and situate this operation within a broader discourse of temporal recursion and anachronistic expression. As the *Oresteia* progresses, the basic model of the parodos (and the concomitant meditations on voice, identity, and time that it inspires) will be elaborated to create iterative patterns that go beyond voice alone. But at the outset of the trilogy, the embedded speeches of the parodos pinpoint voice as the means through which we can begin to think about choral performance.

It is the first embedded speech of the parodos that bears the majority of the weight in establishing this thematization of voice. The Chorus recount how two eagles, one dark, one light, captured a pregnant hare as the Greek troops were assembled at Aulis before sailing for Troy. Calchas understands the significance of the event and addresses Agamemnon as the leader of the army, informing him of Artemis' anger and the need to propitiate the goddess with a new and terrible sacrifice – killing

³ So e.g. Lebeck 1971: 7, who begins with the observation that the parodos “contains the initial statements of themes which run throughout the trilogy” and Goldhill 1984: 13–33, who echoes Lebeck, citing the authority of Kitto 1961: 65: “It [sc. the parodos] lays down the intellectual foundations of the whole trilogy.”

⁴ Lebeck 1971: 7–24, Goldhill 1984: 13–33.

his own daughter (σπευδομένα θυσίαν ἑτέραν ἄνομόν τιν' ἄδαιτον 150). The intricacies of Calchas' interpretation are themselves a subject of rich scholarly endeavor.⁵ But alongside the content of the seer's proclamation, the form in which it is presented demands critical scrutiny.

The *Agamemnon* Chorus, old men who have remained in Argos as the city's men have fought and died at Troy, recall the events at Aulis from their vantage at the war's long-awaited conclusion. Within the overall structure of the parodos, the Chorus' conjuring of Calchas' voice is conspicuously situated within the ode's lone dactylic triad. The dactylic colometry stands out against the anapaests that begin the ode and the iambic and trochaic themes to which it will soon turn.⁶ The formal distinction casts the dactylic triad as a kind of song-within-a-song.⁷

As a self-standing component of the parodos as whole, the triad is further differentiated by the repetition of a single refrain at the end of each of the three stanzas, a feature which is unparalleled elsewhere in choral lyric:⁸ αἴλινον αἴλινον εἰπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω. *Speak woe, woe, but may the good prevail* (121, 138, 159). The refrain overtly links the three stanzas of the dactylic song, underlining the unity of this sub-section of the ode. More importantly for the present discussion, the refrain also has a significant effect on our perception of the relationship between the two figures (of framing and embedded speakers) that give voice to the dactylic song. The refrain is repeated without alteration three times, at the end of each stanza. The regularity of the ritual language is juxtaposed against the very

⁵ E.g. Zeitlin 1965: 466, Goldhill 1984: 19–25, Porter 1990: 33–4.

⁶ I base my understanding of the metrical construction of the parodos on Scott 1984: 30–43, who establishes how the distinctive colometry of the parodos, unusually heterodox even for a dramatic ode, partitions the lengthy song into three discrete units, each with its own focus and tone.

⁷ It is noteworthy that the so-called “Hymn to Zeus” (160–83) is often treated as an internally cohesive unit within the parodos despite the fact that it lacks the metrical cohesion found in the Calchas narrative and embedded speech. For discussion, see Neitzel 1978, Clinton 1979, Smith 1980.

⁸ Burris 2004: 135. The triadic structure itself is unusual for Aeschylus, who generally composes his lyrics in successive pairs of matching strophe and antistrophe, as he will go on to do in the remainder of the ode.

different context in which each of these iterations is situated. Through this variation, the refrain weaves an obscure correspondence between the voice of the Chorus and that of the seer whom they impersonate in embedded speech.

The initial use of the refrain, at the close of the first strophe, comes midway through the Chorus' retrospective narration of the eagle omen at Aulis, before Calchas' embedded speech has been introduced.

βοσκομένω λαγίναν ἐρικύμονα φέρματι γένναν,
βλάψαντε λοισθίων δρόμων· 120
αἴλινον αἴλινον εἶπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.

κεδνὸς δὲ στρατόμαντις ἰδὼν δύο λήμασι δισσοῦς
Ἄτρεϊδας μαχίμους ἐδάη λαγοδαίτας,
πομποὺς ἀρχᾶς, οὕτω δ' εἶπε τεράζων·
(Ag. 121–5)

*They [sc. the eagles] feed upon the hare, heavy with offspring,
stopping her in a final run – sing woe, woe, but let the good
triumph.*

*And the trusted martial seer saw the two twinned in purpose,
and knew that the hare-eaters, attendants at the inception,
were the sons of Atreus, readying for war. And thus did he
speak, interpreting the portent:*

In this first iteration, the refrain seems to belong wholly to the voice of the Chorus, albeit differing somewhat from the more restrained narrative tone that has characterized their song heretofore. The emotionally charged cries interrupt the Chorus' more-or-less orderly description of the hare's demise. The tonal shift lends a sense of ritual to the Chorus' words, adding weight to the claim of narrative authority with which they began the dactylic song (κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν 104).⁹ Beyond simply marking the formal boundary at the end of the strophe, the refrain serves as an important narrative pivot. Although they will still be concerned with the eagle portent, when the Chorus resume their tale at the start of the antistrophe their

⁹ On the ritual tone of the refrain, see Mortiz 1979, Easterling 1988. On the ritual role of the chorus in general, Gruber 2008.

focus will have shifted from the actions of the beasts to the reaction of the Argive seer, the κεδνὸς στρατόμαντις who will disclose the significance of the birds' violent flight.

It is not long after this first mention of Calchas that the Chorus make the transition from their voice to his, introducing an embedded speech through a novel, if readily intelligible, *inquit* frame: οὕτω δ' εἶπε τεράζων (125).¹⁰ The lengthy speech continues past the end of the antistrophe and through the majority of the epode, a duration unparalleled elsewhere in Aeschylus.¹¹ It is here that the formal structure of the ode, and its use of the *ailinon* refrain, comes into active contact with the embedded speech. The second iteration of the refrain interrupts Calchas' embedded speech at the break between antistrophe and epode. The result is a momentary suspension of the boundary between the two voices.

οἴκτῳ γὰρ ἐπίφθονος Ἄρτεμις ἀγνά	
πτανοῖσιν κυσὶ πατρός	135
αὐτότοκον πρό λόχου μογεράν πτάκα θυομένοισιν·	
στυγεῖ δὲ δεῖπνον αἰετῶν.	
αἴλινον αἴλινον εἶπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.	
τόσον περ εὐφρων ἅ καλὰ	140
δρόσοις ἀέπτοις μαλερῶν λεόντων	
πάντων τ' ἄγρονόμων φιλομάστοις	
θηρῶν ὀβρικάλοισι τερπνὰ, ...	

(Ag. 134–43)

for chaste Artemis feels pity for the wretched hare, begrudging the winged dogs of her father who devoured it and its young before their birth; she loathes the feast of the eagles. Cry woe, woe, but let the good prevail.

indeed the beautiful goddess is thus well disposed towards the dewy seed of fearsome lions and to the bosom-loving young of all wild creatures she is a joyous delight ...

How should this second iteration of the refrain be understood? On the one hand, the call is an obvious repetition of the

¹⁰ On the use of the verb τεράζω, Goldhill 1984: 19–20.

¹¹ Schein 2009: 394. See Bers 1997: 29 on the marked use of embedded speech in the *Oresteia* as a whole.

Chorus' earlier ritual invocation. As such it can be understood as an incursion of the framing speaker's voice into the middle of the embedded speech. A momentary resumption of the present (and attendant vocal prerogatives) of the Chorus.¹² Yet no formal marker indicates a shift of speaker. With no textual basis on which to claim the alternation of voice, there is, as Griffith rightly observes, no reason why the second refrain should not "be included within the words quoted from Calchas himself."¹³ But this latter interpretation demands some further explanation. How are we to understand a refrain that is shared between Calchas and the Chorus? What permits these two voices to join together in a single song? In what light should we interpret the embedded voice reprising the words of its framing surrogate, punctuating his prophecy with the same emotional invocation that the Chorus used in their retrospective account? Whatever the answer to these questions – and it is unlikely to be simple or singular – temporal confusion can hardly be avoided. Whether Calchas' refrain prophesies a song yet-to-be-sung or the Chorus proleptically echo the seer's bygone verses (anticipating slightly the vocal reperformance that their embedded speech will achieve), the two moments of vocal expression become intertwined. Notably, the temporal conflation exactly mirrors the formal characteristics of embedded speech itself. The voice from the past intrudes into the present; the voice from the present is subsumed into the past. The *ailinon* refrain insists that we confront the basic uncertainty of embedded speech: whose voice are we hearing, and when?

The use of a refrain makes clear that the voice at issue here is of a very specific sort. Not simply vocal expression, but song.¹⁴ Calchas' echo of the twice sung *ailinon* refrain invites

¹² This has tended to be the interpretation favored by modern editors, who place a closing quotation mark at the end of line 137 and a new opening mark at the beginning of line 140; so e.g. Fraenkel, Page, West, Sommerstein.

¹³ Griffith 2009: 43 n. 82.

¹⁴ This point is further underlined when Calchas injects another ritualistic invocation not long after the second refrain, appealing to Apollo in language that evokes the refrains regularly found in paeans (ἱήιον δὲ καλέω Παιῶνα 146). On the paean refrain, Rutherford 2001: 21, Ford 2006: 286–9. On paeanic language within tragedy, see Rutherford 1994–5, Swift 2010: 70–4. As we saw above (55–8), Pindar exploits the disruptive potential of a similar refrain in his second Paean (ἱή ἱὲ Παῖδαν,

reflection on the nature of ritual refrains more generally. As Nagy has convincingly demonstrated, the shared language of religious song, repeatedly repurposed by different voices at different times, provides an important model of how singers can find themselves – wittingly or not – engaged in strange harmonies with voices from both past and future.¹⁵ The *Agamemnon* parodos adapts the model of generalized ritual repetition to a highly precise circumstance. Both the Chorus and Calchas have clearly defined identities, and their speeches are grounded in specific, distinct moments with overtly delineated perspectives and concerns. The blending of their voices appeals to broad notions of choral iteration, but the practical effect of the unexpected vocal merging is felt in the specific circumstances of the dramatic action. The boundaries that distinguish the Chorus from Calchas, and the distinctive identity that each claims within their surrogate relationship, establishes a syncopated relationship of vocal surrogacy that is a product of, yet distinguished from, the cyclical patterns of ritual renewal.

Aeschylus offers confirmation of the vocal conflation between Calchas and Chorus when he repeats the *ailinon* refrain for a final time at the close of the triad. Where the second iteration lacked any formal speech markers, the last occurrence of the refrain draws explicit attention to the transfer of voice from embedded to framing speaker. Calchas' speech has just been concluded with an elaborate *inquit* frame and the Chorus are once again speaking in their own voice. Superficially, any vocal ambiguity should now be resolved. But by incorporating the refrain into the extended conclusion of Calchas' embedded speech, Aeschylus sets the uneasy relationship between the two speakers in even starker relief.

ἡ ἱέρ. Ποιάν δὲ μήποτε λείποι) to shift abruptly to the embedded speech of Hecate with no introductory *inquit* frame. A similar effect is found in his fourth Paean (39ff.) as well. It may be that Aeschylus was inspired by these compositions, or others like them, to incorporate the paean refrain into the embedded speech of the *Agamemnon* parodos. If so, the strong martial themes in *Pae.* 2 would represent a further point of contact.

¹⁵ See e.g. Nagy 2011, and the related analysis of Power 2000.

Anachronistic Harmonies

τοιάδε Κάλχας ξὺν μεγάλοις ἀγαθοῖς ἀπέκλαξεν
μόρσιμ' ἅπ' ὀρνίθων ὁδίων οἴκοις βασιλείοις·
τοῖς δ' ὁμόφωνον
αἴλινον αἴλινον εἶπέ, τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.

(Ag. 156–9)

*These were the fates from the traveling birds that
Calchas shrieked out, together with great goods, to the
royal house. And in the same voice cry woe, woe, but let
the good prevail.*

As the Chorus wrap up their vocal impersonation, they draw an overt link between the ritual invocation and the speech of the seer.¹⁶ The succinct prefatory addition to the refrain (τοῖς δ' ὁμόφωνον 158) looks back to the demonstrative pronoun (τοιάδε 156) that formally demarcates the end of the *oratio recta*.¹⁷ This articulation of the refrain, now in its third iteration, explicitly takes form in response to the embedded speech. But despite the conspicuous bridge between voices, the precise nature of their relationship remains ill-defined. The relatively uncommon adjective ὁμόφωνος literally means “with the same voice,” but by at least the fourth century BCE it is also used as a technical term to mean “in unison” musically.¹⁸ Both senses can be heard in Aeschylus’ usage. Since the seer’s words are brought to life through embedded speech, the Chorus and Calchas do, in fact, speak with the same voice. The refrain – particularly its second iteration – is both proof and symbol of this vocal blending, an overt point of common ground between the two merged voices. The other sense of ὁμόφωνος implies a somewhat different relationship. To sing or speak in unison is not a merging so much as it is a synchrony. Two voices can act in concert without abandoning their individual identities. The refrain can let us hear Calchas and the Chorus do this as well. From their distinct vantages – the Chorus in the performative present in Argos and Calchas ten years earlier at Aulis – each performer lends voice to the same song, each gives breath to the same refrain.

¹⁶ Bers 1997: 33.

¹⁷ The use of the demonstrative pronoun is a familiar form of *inquit* frame.

¹⁸ The first clear attestation is in Aristotle *Pr.* 921a7.

The acute blending of voices achieved through the shared ritual refrain finds parallel in other correspondences between the Chorus and Calchas that place focus on the same questions of time and voice raised by the formal structuring of the embedded speech. The complex temporal relationship between the two voices is part of a broader thematization of temporality that runs throughout the parodos.¹⁹ Both the Chorus and their embedded speaker begin their reflections with overt discussions of time. This explicit temporal language serves to mark out the abiding importance of chronological concerns, but it also sets the disparate perspectives of the two speakers in stark relief.

In his role as prophet (an identity shared by the majority of embedded speakers in Pindar and Aeschylus), Calchas looks to the future. His speech is expressly intended to anticipate future events. Looking on Zeus' eagles as they feast on the pregnant hare, he foretells Priam's downfall: χρόνῳ μὲν ἄγρεϊ Πριάμου πόλιν ἄδε κέλευθος *In time this path captures the city of Priam* (126). Even within the context of prophetic utterance, the outsized importance of temporal concerns is denoted by the fact that the first word of the seer's speech is "time" (χρόνος). Calchas' interest in time is matched by that of the Chorus, who inaugurate the lengthy narrative of the parodos by situating themselves at a distance from the beginning of the war: δέκατον μὲν ἔτος τόδ' ἐπεὶ Πριάμου / μέγας ἀντίδικος ... *This is the tenth year since the great opponent of Priam* ... (40–1). The deictic pronoun τόδ' binds the Chorus to the present circumstances, to the reality of their experience of life at Argos in the war's tenth year. So too, Calchas employs the deictic pronoun ἄδε to situate himself within the reality of the martial expedition. Both voices range across time and place,²⁰ but each is also grounded in the singular moment of utterance. The Chorus speak from the end of the war, Calchas from its outset. Yet the two vantages are in perfect symmetry. Mirroring the effect

¹⁹ This aspect of the ode is treated with characteristic acuity by Goldhill 1984: 13–33.

²⁰ The spatial and temporal range covered in Calchas' speech is nicely described by Schein 2009: 393, see also Barrett 2007: 262–3, Grethlein 2013: 80–2.

of the shared *ailinon* refrain, Calchas' anticipatory perspective inverts the Chorus' retrospective view. The Chorus inhabit the very moment – the day of Troy's capture – foretold by the seer's prophecy.²¹

Another dimension of the shared endeavor and vocal "cooperation" of Chorus and Calchas is brought to the fore through the analogous avian images that shape both speakers' words. Scholars have long noted the distinct parallels between the vulture simile with which the Chorus describe the Atreidai at the beginning of the *parodos* (48–54) and the eagle portent that Calchas interprets in his speech.²² As with the *ailinon* refrain, the relationship between the two bird images resists chronological clarity. In the narrative structure (*récit*) of the *parodos* the Chorus' vulture simile anticipates the eagle omen. But the chronology of events (*histoire*) situates the omen, and the concomitant events at Aulis, a decade prior to the Chorus' song at Argos. Does the Chorus' image of the mournful vultures, grieving over the violent loss of their young (ἐκπατίοις ἄλγεσι παίδων ὑπάτοι λεχέων στροφοδοινοῦνται 49–51) reimagine the violent brutality of the twin eagles descending upon the pregnant hare? Or does the influence, like the song itself, develop in the other direction? The juxtaposition of the two kindred figures invites contemplation of how such a harmony of expression is affected by the passage of time.²³

The birds serve as a figurative bridge between the two speakers of the ode. They are a replication (an incongruous further iteration) of the unsettling connection established through the *ailinon* refrain. And, as such, they raise analogous questions about voice and identity. Where the *ailinon* refrain achieves such reflection through the insistent sameness of its language – the verbatim invocation, scrutinized through the prism of three distinct contexts of articulation – the avian

²¹ Although, as Grethlein 2013: 81 notes, the Chorus have yet to learn of this fact.

²² Exemplary are Zeitlin 1965: 481–2, Lebeck 1971: 8, 13, Rosenmeyer 1982: 126–7, Heath 1999a: 20–7.

²³ Schein 2009: 392–3, who claims that the speakers are at once ignorant of each other's words yet must also be said to "know" them in some way.

images hint at their significance through the accumulation of subtle difference. Where Calchas looks upon “real” birds in flight at Aulis, the Chorus’ vultures are metaphorical, a figure of similitude removed from the actual events of the past.²⁴ Where the vultures of the Chorus’ simile are nurturing parents, the eagles of the omen are predatory, child-destroying.²⁵ The divergences, by turns granular and essential, suggest an analogy with the speakers who describe them. The Chorus and Calchas are at once too similar and unmistakably distinct.

Within the complex matrix of voice layered over voice, the *ailinon* refrain emerges as an emblem of theatrical reenactment. The phrase can be shared across time, reperformed verbatim by different voices yet also transformed and reimagined in each iteration. The Chorus’ vocal impersonation of Calchas becomes a paradigm for the mimetic performance itself. The Chorus, in the vocal guise of Calchas, recount the momentous events with a vivid, almost dramatic, lucidity. Yet, the critical moment from the past is not simply replayed in the present. The formal structure of the speech destabilizes the dramatic chronology so as to achieve an “entangling of the past with the present” that challenges the most basic assumptions about voice and identity.²⁶ The clear foregrounding of the speakers’ inverted temporalities and of their related, yet divergent avian imagery further complicates the unusual structure that underpins the interweaving of their voices through the *ailinon* refrain. The Chorus sing *in unison* (ὁμόφωνον) with their embedded speaker across time and space. The anachronistic harmony that they produce is at once enigmatic and unmistakable. Scrutiny of their collaboration raises questions – about the nature of song, voice, identity, and time – that resist simple answers.

²⁴ So Grethlein 2013: 83 sees an erosion of the boundaries between “sign and reality.” The interrelationship of these two types of avian figuration (simile and portent) in Homer is explored by Bushnell 1982.

²⁵ Zeitlin 1965: 481–2.

²⁶ Grethlein 2013: 80. As Schein 2009: 390 observes, “the relative spatial and temporal vagueness in the lyric portion of the parodos has to do with the Chorus’ way of viewing human events in the perspective of a divine or cosmic order, not unlike the perspective of Kalkhas himself.”

In keeping with the general pattern of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus, Calchas' voice is heard in isolation within the *Agamemnon* parodos. Following the third and final repetition of the *ailinon* refrain the Chorus abruptly shift focus and Calchas' lengthy speech finds no immediate response. But Calchas' embedded voice does not go entirely without answer, nor is his the only voice from the past to make itself heard in the parodos. When the Chorus resume their narration of the events at Aulis after their intervening prayer to Zeus (and meditation on the human condition more generally), their attention turns once again to the words and voices that shaped that critical moment at the start of the war. Calchas' prophetic warnings are recalled in indeterminate *oratio obliqua* (198–204), and this time they are met by the voice of Agamemnon.

ἄναξ δ' ὁ πρέσβυς τόδ' εἶπε φωνῶν·	205
ῥαρεῖα μὲν κῆρ τὸ μὴ πιθέσθαι,	
βαρεῖα δ' εἰ	
τέκνον δαΐξω, δόμων ἄγαλμα,	
μιαίνων παρθενοσφάγοισιν	
ῥεῖθροισ πατρώους χέρας πέλας βω-	210
μοῦ· τί τῶνδ' ἄνευ κακῶν;	
πῶς λιπόναις γένωμαι	
ξυμμαχίας ἀμαρτῶν;	
παυσανέμου γὰρ θυσίας	
παρθενίου θ' αἵματος ὀρ-	215
γῆ περιόργω ἐπιθυ-	
μεῖν θέμις. εὖ γὰρ εἴη·	

(Ag. 205–17)

The old lord spoke, saying “Grave destruction is it to disobey, but grave too should I cut down my child, prize of my house, staining a father’s hands with the streams of a virgin sacrificed upon the altar. Which of these things is devoid of evils? How can I be a deserter and break faith with my allies? For it is right to crave with an overly spirited drive a wind-stopping sacrifice and the blood of a virgin. Yes, let this be good.

The Chorus recreate Agamemnon's lamentation in vivid embedded speech. They allow us to hear the leader of the Greek forces contemplate the terrible choice that he must

make, weighing whether it would be worse to betray his troops or sacrifice his daughter, the prize of his house. He will, of course, choose the latter, donning the “yoke of necessity” (219) and spilling the innocent blood of Iphigenia – a transgression against his household for which he will soon pay the price in the *here* and *now* of the dramatic action.²⁷ But within the past-made-present of the *parodos*, the unexpected emergence of a second voice in embedded speech demonstrates yet another way that song can accrue vocal layers in the course of time.

Agamemnon’s words, neatly fitted within the boundaries of the stanza, do not encroach upon the present to nearly the same degree that Calchas’ earlier speech did. It is, rather, through the belated position of Agamemnon’s response to the seer that this second speech enters into the discourse on vocal temporality that characterized the earlier embedded speech. A period of time separates Agamemnon’s words from Calchas’ prophecy, the speech towards which they double back (παλιμμήκη χρόνον 196). The delay at the level of *histoire* mirrors the formal narrative segregation of Agamemnon’s embedded speech from that of the seer. Although the Chorus tell of how Calchas once again shrieked (μάντις ἔκλαγξεν (201) ~ Κάλχας ... ἀπέκλαγξεν 156) in warning of Artemis’ wrath,²⁸ the distance between the two voices – both in terms of *histoire* and *récit* – is striking.²⁹ Compared to the close vocal intertwining of Calchas and the Chorus, Agamemnon’s voice comes as an odd and unexpected supplement. His unanswerable question – τί τῶνδ’ ἄνευ κακῶν; (211) – does not seek a true interlocutor so much as reflect the profound isolation of a leader faced with so intractable a choice. In this, we can hear echoes of Pindar’s Apollo, giving voice to his anguish at the impending (though ultimately averted) death of his son Asclepias (P. 3.40–2). And yet, as Agamemnon’s speech

²⁷ On the relationship between the sacrifice of Iphigenia and the murder of Agamemnon (and Cassandra), see Zeitlin 1965, Lebeck 1971: 76, Scodel 1996, Wohl 1998: 86–91.

²⁸ Bers 1997: 33 notes that “[t]he powerful *verbum dicendi* repeats, in simplex form, the word used at 156 to close the [*oratio recta*], but Calchas’ awful words are not allowed to come to the surface; rather their effect is seen in the Atreidae’s gesture, striking the ground with their staves.”

²⁹ Barrett 2007: 262 sees the two embedded speeches as linked “but only vaguely.”

draws to a close, his haunting wish for a positive outcome (εὔ γάρ εἴη 217) distinctly echoes, albeit obliquely, the language of the *ailinon* refrain (τὸ δ' εὔ νικάτω), the shared words that bound the Chorus so oddly to their first embedded speaker.³⁰

Agamemnon's untimely speech inaugurates a complex dance of sound and silence that moves further into the past before arriving, inescapably, in the reality of the present.³¹ Iphigenia, the innocent victim of her father's ambition, is twice silenced – first through the violent muzzling of her voice that once filled her father's feasts with joyful songs (238–47), and then through the sacrifice that ends her life. The brutal act leaves the Chorus at a loss for words (τὰ δ' ἐνθεν οὔτ' εἶδον οὔτ' ἐννέπω 248). In their narrative *aporia*, they turn once again to Calchas: τέχνηαι δὲ Κάλχαντος οὐκ ἄκραντοι. (249). The seer's unspoken words stand for what the Chorus cannot – or will not – say.³²

The Chorus' song is about more than voice. It is a reflection on the power that voices from the past have to shape the sounds and silences of the present. As the harmonious blending of the Chorus and Calchas through their shared refrain shifts to the incongruous, and ultimately violent, polyphony of Agamemnon's response, the political and psychological registers are unmistakable. The potent ethical component in these vocal reflections has roots in themes that run throughout the trilogy, a negotiation of *choros* and *choreia* that, as Taplin and Wilson have argued, permits the *Oresteia* as a whole to reflect on the nature of choral song itself.³³ The voices of the

³⁰ Cf. Winnington-Ingram 1954: 26.

³¹ Barrett 2007: 262 speaks of “dizzying anachronies [which] are accompanied by other temporal devices that deserve notice: repetition and extreme summary that verges on ellipsis.”

³² See Goldhill 1984: 31. The tension between the Chorus' horror at the sacrifice of Iphigenia and Calchas' (seeming) support for it has led some modern critics to question whether the Chorus are in fact in sympathy with the views of the seer. Bers 1997: 30–1 notes how the Chorus' refusal to relate the gruesome conclusion stands in marked contrast to the granting of “substantial space and directness” to Calchas' *oratio recta*. By contrast, Degener 2001: 65–7 describes the Chorus as wholly mistrustful of Calchas, going so far as to “mock” him. More subtle is the position of Gantz 1983: 69–78, who claims that the Chorus believe in and support Calchas' narrative of the events at Aulis, although they are wrong to do so.

³³ Taplin and Wilson 1993: 170. More recently, Wohl 2015 has explored the ways in which Athenian drama establishes important parallels between politics and form.

parodos offer a clear demonstration of what is at stake for Aeschylus in properly understanding the conditions, by turns ethical and aesthetic, which allow his tragic song to find voice. The vocal reenactments that the Chorus enable through their embedded speeches mirror the role of the Chorus itself within the mimetic drama. As men of mythical Argos conjured into presence by fifth-century performers who bring voices from the past to life through their song, the Chorus are themselves a mimetic reenactment of the choral performers and the relationship between the two rests on an anachronistic harmony analogous to that exposed within Aeschylus' drama through the *ailinon* refrain. Within the dense vocal structure of the parodos, it is the Chorus and Calchas whose blended yet distinct identities most pointedly express the surrogate structures of mimetic composition. As the drama unfolds, however, Agamemnon's voice will reprise the syncopated rhythms of the parodos. Finding his way back into the theater through a second surrogate, Agamemnon will return by means of the actor who will appear onstage claiming to direct his first words to the city of Argos (πρῶτον μὲν Ἄργος 810). Like the involuted temporalities of the Chorus' *ailinon* refrain, Agamemnon's first speech is already a belated reenactment, a reprisal of a voice, albeit already mediated through vocal surrogacy, from the drama's own past. Through the complex vocal layering of the parodos, Aeschylus exploits the mimetic properties of embedded speech to reveal the recursive temporalities that permit the voices within his own song to come into presence.

Prophecy Before its Season

Like the *Agamemnon* parodos, the use of embedded speech in Pindar's P. 4 is something of an outlier amongst the poet's extant works. The ode, which presents an atypically lengthy narration of the exploits of Jason and his Argonauts, contains more embedded speakers, and more direct speech, than any other of Pindar's (or Aeschylus') works. The margin of difference is staggering: the seven embedded speeches of P. 4, totaling over 100 lines, amount to approximately a third

of the poem.³⁴ The divergence is not simply a question of quantity; the form of the embedded speeches in P. 4 is also at odds with what one finds elsewhere in the corpus. Most of the embedded speeches in P. 4 display no blending of voice between framer and framed, contain no prophetic insight, and reveal no interest in questions of time. In tone and structure the embedded speeches of P. 4 are far closer to those of Homer and Stesichorus than what is found elsewhere in Pindar (or Aeschylus).³⁵ Especially notable is the fact that a number of speeches are met by a response also in *oratio recta*.³⁶ The uncertain, isolated conclusions so common in embedded speech elsewhere in Pindar and Aeschylus are here replaced by variations on the familiar epic formulae that readily match one speaker's words to the next: τοὶ μὲν ἀλλάλοισιν ἀμειβόμενοι γάρυον τοιαῦτ' (93–4, without response); τὸν δὲ θαρσύνῃσιν ἀγανοῖσι λόγοις ὧδ' ἀμείφθη (101–2); ὧς ἄρ' ἔειπεν, ἀκᾶ δ' ἀνταγόρευεν καὶ Πελίας (156); σύνθεσιν ταύταν ἐπαινέσαντες οἱ μὲν κρίθεν (168, without response).

Given its relatively conventional usage of embedded speech, P. 4 might be thought to eschew the concerns that characterize Pindar's and Aeschylus' approach to the form elsewhere. Such a conclusion is, however, preempted by the extended embedded prophecy in the voice of the Colchian princess, Medea, that serves as preamble to the mythical narrative proper.³⁷ Within the unsettled landscape of P. 4 as a whole, Medea's speech stands as a discrete vocal performance recreated within the poem through the mimetic powers of the poet and his performers. Medea's speech, like the poem in which it is quoted, travels freely through time and space, demonstrating the spatio-temporal boundary crossing that is a hallmark of

³⁴ The closest comparison are the two direct speeches, comprising 33 lines, of P. 9 (approximately a quarter of the poem). More commonly, direct speeches in Pindar represent less than a tenth of the poems in which they are found.

³⁵ On the "epic-like" pacing and chronology of the central narrative of P. 4, see Robbins 1975: 205, Nünlist 2007: 245–6, Mackie 2003: 53, Sigelman 2016: 124–5.

³⁶ This occurs at only two other points in Pindar (P. 9 and N. 10), both of which draw attention to the unusual nature of the response (see above, 33 n. 32).

³⁷ The relationship between the poem's two mythical sections is a subject of some debate, see most recently Sigelman 2016: 120, with bibliography.

Pindar's poetry. Her embedded voice is a microcosm of the vocal techniques that permit the song to range over a strikingly disparate array of times and places. In a foundational study of P. 4, Felson has evocatively described how such spatial and temporal fluctuations produce a "vicarious transport," constantly reframing the *here* and *now* of Pindar's song.³⁸ Much as the powerful embedded prophecy of Calchas serves as a programmatic vocal performance at the beginning of Aeschylus' extended trilogy, the embedded prophecy of Medea, situated at the beginning of Pindar's unusually protracted ode, stands an internal archetype of the song's vocal temporalities.

While Medea is commonly characterized by her powerful sorcery (as, indeed, she will be later in the P. 4 narrative (221–2, 233)), her intervention at the beginning of the poem highlights her prophetic gifts.³⁹ At the heart of the dense and far-ranging speech is a prophecy about the future foundation of Cyrene, the city of birth of the *laudandus*. This prophetic import is clearly articulated by the narrator after the close of Medea's embedded speech (61). But it can be hard to discern amidst the maelstrom of temporal, geographic, and vocal coordinates contained in Medea's embedded speech. Before exploring the ways in which Medea's speech intrudes upon and recontextualizes the framing voice that brings hers into being, it will be helpful to assess the intricate structure of her speech.

Medea's prophecy can be divided into six sections, each with distinct perspectives regarding time, place, and voice.⁴⁰ Medea's first words (13–16 = section 1) ground her voice in the site where the speech is (first) given voice: the Cycladic island of Thera.

κέκλυτε, παῖδες ὑπερθύμων τε φωτῶν καὶ θεῶν·
φαμί γὰρ τᾶσδ' ἔξ ἀλιπλά-
κτου ποτὲ γᾶς Ἑπάφοιο κόραν

³⁸ Felson 1999, to which my analysis here is indebted.

³⁹ O'Higgins 1997: 111–12 demonstrates how the two aspects of her character are in fact connected. See also Farenga 1977: 19–20. On the importance of prophecy as a general theme in the poem, see Segal 1986b: 42–51.

⁴⁰ Calame 2014: 289–91, 293–4 analyzes the chronology with a specific focus on the eventual foundation of Cyrene.

Prophecy Before its Season

ἀστέων ῥίζαν φυτεύσεσθαι μελησιμβρότων
Διὸς ἐν Ἰαμμῶνος θεμέθλοις.

15

(P. 4.13–16)

*Listen, sons of courageous men and gods, for I declare that
from this sea-buffed land, an offspring of Epaphus will
plant the root of cities beloved to mortals in the foundations
of Zeus Ammon.*

The location is identified by the narrator in the introductory *inquit* frame (not quoted here, but to which we will return later). But, as Felson has shown, Medea's strong deictic language lends a palpable geographical reality to her utterance.⁴¹ From *this* land, Medea states, the land where she now stands, new cities will grow in Libya (τᾷσδ' ἐξ ἀλιπλάκτου ποτὲ γᾶς (14). Complementing her spatial index, Medea situates her utterance emphatically in the present through the paired use of a second-person imperative and a first-person present tense (κέκλυτε 11, φαμί 14). She demands the attention of her Argonaut audience (and with it that of Pindar's song), creating a reality around her voice despite its formal isolation. The first-person declaration is also an overt assertion of the power of her voice. Medea adopts the authority of a *mantis* and identifies the prophetic nature of her words. In doing so, she signals that the speech itself is an event in its own right. But already in these opening lines a second place and a second time, the North Africa of the future, has been introduced into the frame. It is there that the root (of Cyrene) will be planted, though the Argonauts themselves will not live to see it. As the speech continues, Medea moves from (the embedded) *here* to *there* and (embedded) *now* to (its future) *then*. The deictic language fades as the seer vividly imagines the exceptional horsemanship that will be achieved once the transition from Thera to Libya is complete (ἀντὶ δελφίνων δ' ἐλαχυπτερύγων ἵππους ... ἀνία τ' ἀντ' ἐρετμῶν 17–18 = section 2).

As the speech builds momentum, Medea's contemplation of the future unexpectedly returns to the past, and to the

⁴¹ Felson 1999: 16–18.

experiences that she and the Argonauts shared during their recent travels in a different part of North Africa, on the shores of Lake Triton (19–37 = section 3a). The prophecy that Medea offers of the future is, it emerges, the interpretation of a portent (ὄρνις 19) that has already receded into the past. The precise distance between the earlier omen and Medea’s prophetic speech is never made clear, an omission that takes on significance in light of the numerical specificity so frequently applied to chronological relationships in this poem, and in this section of Medea’s speech in particular. The vision of the past to which Medea turns in this section is multilayered. Various locations – Lake Triton (20), the North African desert (26), the shores of Ocean (26) – are matched against different calculations of time – twelve days carrying the Argo across the land (25–6), the instant of Poseidon’s appearance (τοῦτάκι 28), the haste of the Argonauts’ desire to return home (31–4). Atop this prismatic landscape, Medea introduces a corresponding range of voices: Zeus’ thunderpeal of approval (23), Medea’s own instructions to the Argonaut crew (27), the solicitous words of the disguised Poseidon (29–34). None of these figures speaks in *oratio recta*, rather the internal polyphony is enfolded within the capacious boundaries of Medea’s own chameleon-like voice.

The promised future of Medea’s speech seems to recede even further from view as she continues to relate details from the Argonauts’ past. North African desert gives way once more to the sea, where the men’s carelessness leads to the loss of the enigmatic clod of earth given to Euphemus during the earlier encounter with Poseidon (38–43 = section 3b).⁴² The loss, which came despite Medea’s frequent admonitions to guard the gift,⁴³ is described as “before its season” (πρὶν ὥρας 43)⁴⁴ and its mention sparks a counterfactual vision of the future.

⁴² The significance of the clod is well explored by Farenga 1977: 27–8, Segal 1986b: 150–2, and Calame 2014: 296–8.

⁴³ Medea’s role in these events is ambiguous. She claims to have learned (πεύθομαι 38) of the loss of the clod, despite the clear implication that she was present throughout the journey.

⁴⁴ On the unusual construction, see Braswell 1988: 122.

Medea describes the great dynasty in the Peloponnese that might have been granted to the descendants of Euphemus, if not for the Argonauts' carelessness (43–8 = section 4).⁴⁵ Errors of the past here splinter forward towards events that will never take place, an empire that will never be. Yet the foregone glories of a kingdom on the Peloponnese are not entirely divorced from the future that will indeed transpire. In her counterfactual narrative, Medea also foretells the destined departure of the Danaans from Argos and Sparta in the fourth generation (τετράτων παίδων κ' ἐπιγεινομένων 47). This event – the so-called “Dorian invasion” – will come to pass even without the involvement of a Euphemid dynasty. Finally, Medea settles into a vision of the future as it is to come, born of the untimely course of the sea-washed clod (50–3 = section 5). And as she relates how a race sprung from “foreign women's beds” will find its way to Thera, the journey of her speech arrives back at its starting point, the ground on which the embedded speaker herself stands: τάνδε ... νᾶσον (51–2).⁴⁶

One more voice, one more time, and two more places round out Medea's prophecy. In her final words, she speaks of an even later time (χρόνῳ ὑστέρῳ 55–6) when Euphemus' descendant will travel to Delphi and then, guided by the oracle, make his way to the land of the Nile (53–6 = section 6). In her final words, Medea reveals that it will take yet another prophecy, in a future time and distant place – the golden house of Apollo at Delphi (πολυχρύσῳ ποτ' ἐν δώματι 53) – to guide the as yet unnamed man to his as-yet unspecified destination, Cyrene. The nebulous promises of these final lines assume the aid of Apollo's voice (Φοῖβος ἀμνάσει 54), but also – though less overtly – the cooperation of the narrator, whose concluding frame to the speech will fill in the details of Medea's prophetic vision with the certain knowledge of retrospect.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Pavlou 2012: 104.

⁴⁶ The movements of and within the poem are beautifully analyzed by Felson 1999. More recently, Sigelman 2016: 112–14 describes the poem as a “song-journey.”

⁴⁷ On Apollo's role in framing the poem, see Calame 2003: 88–92, Athanassaki 2009a: 437–9, Maslov 2015: 206–8.

Before turning to the role of this much-needed supplement, and the ways in which it invites consideration of the bond between framing and embedded speaker, it is well to note just how complex Medea's words are in their own right. Through its precipitate temporal transitions – from a promised distant future, to the shared struggles of the recent past, to events that were once (but are no longer) possible to hope for, to the future as it is now set to unfold – the speech creates a densely structured internal timescape in which traditional notions of chronology yield to the layered, looping perspective of the prophet's insight.⁴⁸ The ease with which spatial and temporal coordinates are juxtaposed and overlaid renders boundaries porous, and often difficult to track. Across the geographic and temporal range of her words, Medea threads the voices of those (her own past self amongst them) who join with her to reshape the unfolding future. There may be no shortage of knotty prophetic utterances in the poetry of Pindar and Aeschylus, but none moves through an amalgamation time, place, and voice as profuse as that found in Medea's speech in P. 4.

For all its internal complexity, however, the significance of Medea's speech is dependent on the voice of the framing speaker. This claim holds on a literal level, insofar as it is Medea's impersonator, not the Colchian herself, who gives voice to the details of her prophecy. But there is also a more figurative dependence, a reciprocal illumination of framer and framed, that goes to the heart of the type of performative surrogacy that Pindar and Aeschylus explore through their deployment of embedded speech. To make sense of the relationship between Medea's embedded speech and the larger choral performance of which it is part, we must examine how the framing narrator integrates her voice into the song that he has begun.

Medea's embedded speech begins at the end of the first antistrophe of P. 4, a position of prominence that reflects its programmatic status within the poem as a whole. The

⁴⁸ Sigelman 2016: 116.

Prophecy Before its Season

relatively conventional language of the *inquit* frame (εἶπε δ' οὕτως ἡμιθέοισιν Ἰάσονος αἰχμαθῶ ναύταις II–12) belies a subtle vocal interweaving that establishes a correspondence between framing and embedded speaker. When Medea begins to speak in the indexical language of deictic pronouns and the first-person present, she is replicating the vocal technique that the framing narrator has exploited from the very first word of the poem. As Felson so ably details, the deictic language of the song's opening stanzas inaugurates the sequence of vicarious transport that will characterize the composition.

Σάμερον μὲν χρῆ σε παρ' ἀνδρὶ φίλῳ
 στᾶμεν, εὐίππου βασιλῆι Κυράνας,
 ὄφρα κωμάζοντι σὺν Ἀρκεσίλῃ,
 Μοῖσα, Λατοῖδαισιν ὀφειλόμενον Πυ-
 θωνί τ' αὖξῃς οὖρον ὕμνων,
 ἔνθα ποτὲ χρυσέων Διὸς αἰετῶν παρέδρος
 οὐκ ἀποδάμου Ἀπολλωνος τυχόντος ἱέρα
 χρησεν οἰκιστῆρα Βάττον
 καρποφόρου Λιβύας, ἱέραν
 νᾶσον ὥς ῥῃ λιπῶν κτίσσειεν εὐάρματον
 πόλιν ἐν ἀργεννόνετι μαστῶ

(P.4 1-8)

Today it is necessary for you to stand beside a beloved man, by the king of horse-famed Cyrene, so that joining in celebration with Arcesilas, Muse, you may exalt the fair wind of hymns owed to the children of Leto and to Pytho, where once the priestess, seated beside the golden eagles of Zeus, with Apollo no longer absent, prophesied Battus would be the founder of fruit-bearing Libya, so that leaving the holy island he would establish a city famed for chariots in a white bay.

Pindar begins his song for Arcesilas with an emphasis on the demands of the present, of *today*. Where- and whenever this insistent *here* and *now* is to be located,⁴⁹ Pindar is cognizant of his poetic obligations on the occasion: to induce the Muse to stand (σῳσμεν 2) beside the *laudandus* as he celebrates his victory. As will soon happen with the deictically insistent speech

⁴⁹ Segal 1986b: 136, Felson 1999: 14–16.

that the poet will embed within his song, a geographic bifurcation emerges almost immediately, pulling, on the one hand, in the direction of Delphi where the victor's glorious deeds were accomplished, and, on the other, towards his home city of Cyrene, founded by his illustrious ancestor. The yoking of these two places, Delphi and Cyrene, like the spatial doubling of Medea's speech, is a product of their interconnected history. The prophecy from Delphi led to the establishment of Cyrene. Following this narrative trajectory, the poet is prompted to offer a brief account of the city's foundation, slipping seamlessly from present to past (ἐνθα ποτέ 4).⁵⁰ Through its ready movement between discrete locations (Delphi, Cyrene, and also Thera) and integration of other voices (ἱέρεια χρῆσεν 5–6), the narrative summary contains a preview of elements that will feature in Medea's speech. A comparison with the relationship between framing and embedded speaker in the *Agamemnon* parodos underlines the multiplicities that characterize both voices in P. 4. In the *Agamemnon* parodos, Calchas looked forward almost exclusively to the fall of Troy as target of his prophecy, mirroring the fixed position of the Chorus who recreate his speech on that very day that his words foretold. By contrast, Medea's roaming speech matches the equally itinerant voice that frames it.

Pindar's narrative movement from *today* to past, from *here* to Delphi and then to Cyrene also forms a bridge between the poet and the embedded speaker whose voice has yet to be heard. The foundation of Cyrene, foretold by the oracle and recounted here by the poet, is explicitly identified as a (long-belated) confirmation of Medea's prophecy (τὸ Μηδείας ἔπος ἀγκομίσαι 9). Pindar's own words, no less than the actions of Cyrene's legendary founder, Battus, underscore the truth of Medea's mantic utterance. But whereas the poet defines the chronological relationship between Medea and Battus with great specificity (ἐβδόμα καὶ σὺν δεκάτῃ γενεᾷ 10), he is less clear as to how he, speaking *today*, is linked with Medea, whose immortal mouth (ἄθανάτου στόματος 11) will soon be

⁵⁰ Felson 1999: 14–15.

joined with his own. In this introductory framing section, we are given only vague hints as to how the sympathy of voice should be construed. Medea's prophecy has, in some significant yet unarticulated way, already expressed what Pindar wants to say. The surrogacy is not as overt as that claimed for Adrastus in O. 6, where the Argive fighter's words were claimed as "ready praise" for Pindar's *laudandus*.⁵¹ Nevertheless, there is a palpable sense that the Colchian princess, whose voice will dominate the first three triads of Pindar's song, assumes the role normally reserved for the poet himself.⁵²

Even as Pindar's own temporal deixis creates a bond of analogy with his deictically grounded embedded speaker, it sets the two voices in tension. In adopting Medea's voice, Pindar must relinquish, or at least reimagine, what it means for him to sing *today* (σήμερον), *here* beside the victor. With dominion over the song's *here* and *now* transferred to Medea's embedded voice for so extended a duration, the *here* and *now* of Pindar and his *laudandus* becomes increasingly remote. The effect differs in particulars from the rapid vocal juxtapositions of the *Agamemnon* parodos and its shared ritual refrain, but the consequence is the same. The vocal ground on which the performative present is constructed undergoes a profound destabilization. But Pindar's song draws our attention to an aspect of this discourse that is left largely unexplored in Aeschylus' text. For while the conventions of tragic performance can easily obscure the fact that the framing voice of Aeschylus' chorus is itself a mimetic impersonation, the insistently (and deliberately) problematic identity of Pindar's first-person voice (the character I have been referring to as "the poet" or "Pindar") invites us to consider this additional layer of vocal surrogacy.⁵³

If Medea's voice stands in a relationship of surrogacy to that of the poet, the surrogate relationship of embedded speech is itself an analogue to that of poet and performer. In the actantial terminology favored by Calame, the "enunciative situation"

⁵¹ The passage is discussed above 44–5.

⁵² Segal 1986b: 163.

⁵³ The vast bibliography on Pindar's first-person voice is discussed at 21 I n. 6.

within the song mirrors the “communicative situation” of the performance.⁵⁴ Just as the temporal reality of the framing speaker is redefined by his impersonation of Medea’s voice, so too the choral performers of P. 4 will step into a different time and space through their own vocal impersonations, standing as surrogates for the “poet” whose voice they will recreate in song. Taking up the voice of the song, performers conjure an embedded speech without *inquit* frame. Inhabiting the vocal reality of another place and time, they try to enter into an elusive moment of vocal origins, to sing within the *today* of Pindar’s song.

As the pioneering work of Morgan, and later D’Alessio, has shown, the bifurcated vision developed through Medea’s speech is one that Pindar himself cultivates throughout his poetry, encoding his compositions with dissonant temporal structures that call attention to the distinct moments (composition, rehearsal, reperformance) in which his songs take shape.⁵⁵ The embedded voice of Medea’s prophecy, with its temporal refractions and internal polyphony, contributes to this discourse of internal anachronism. Her prophecy exposes the fiction of a pure present in the *here* and *now*. It makes clear that a single voice can never be disentangled from those that form its past and future. Medea cannot offer her prophecy without Pindar’s song. But, conversely, nor can Pindar create his harmonies without incorporating voices not his own, without bringing speakers from other times and places to life within a single capacious, heterodox occasion of performance.

Following Medea’s extended speech, the poet’s concluding reflections draw the relationship between framer and framed farther into the foreground. Where the initial correspondence between the two voices was established through vocal parallelisms, now Pindar triangulates the relationship through the invocation of unheard interlocutors. The reflections are set out in a short span. Only twelve lines separate the conclusion

⁵⁴ Calame 1995: esp. 1–20.

⁵⁵ Morgan 1993, D’Alessio 2004.

of Medea's speech from the beginning of the more conventional Argonaut narrative (a length identical to the poet's introduction to her speech). The transition, in which the poet's first-person voice is foregrounded, recontextualizes the relationship between the framing and embedded speaker.

ἧ ῥά Μηδείας ἐπέων στίχες, ἔπτα-
 ξαν δ' ἀκίνητοι σιωπᾷ
 ἦροες ἀντίθεοι πυκινὰν μῆτιν κλύοντες.
 ὦ μάκαρ υἱὲ Πολυμνάστου, σὲ δ' ἐν τούτῳ λόγῳ
 χρησμὸς ὤρθωσεν μελίσσας
 Δελφίδος αὐτομάτῳ κελάδῳ·
 (P.4.57–60)

*So spoke the ranks of Medea's words, and the god-like
 heroes crouched unmoving in silence listening to her dense
 wisdom. O fortunate son of Polymnestus, it was you whom,
 in this speech, the oracle of the Delphic bee raised up with a
 spontaneous shout.*

Scholars have made much of the concluding *inquit* frame, especially the unusual label, “ranks of words,” that it applies to Medea's speech.⁵⁶ It is certainly possible to hear something of the polyphonic layering that we have traced in Medea's speech in the image of words arrayed one behind the other, like an army marching into battle. But although the formulation may be novel, the *inquit* language also conveys a strong Homeric tone, an anticipation, perhaps, of the epicizing tenor of the narrative to come.⁵⁷ The epic tone continues in the designation of the Argonauts' silent response (ἔπταξαν δ' ἀκίνητοι σιωπᾷ), which adapts *inquit* language found throughout Homer's works.⁵⁸ Most intriguing, however, is the apostrophe to Battus (the fortunate son of Polymnestus), whom Pindar addresses as the subject of “this speech” (ἐν τούτῳ λόγῳ), a reference to the Delphic prophecy foretold in Medea's speech.

⁵⁶ See Farenga 1977, Segal 1986b: 154, and recently O'Higgins 1997: 115–16 on the possible connection between the phrase ἐπέων στίχες and the idea of written poetry.

⁵⁷ Pindar returns explicitly to the question of Homer's voice, and voices in Homer, towards the end of the poem (277), on which see Briand 2001: 35–6. Sigelman 2016: 120–8 emphasizes the ways in which the epicizing later narrative is nevertheless stylistically distinguished from the work of “an anonymous Homeric singer” (127).

⁵⁸ Hexameter formulae for non-verbal response are discussed above, 32.

The second-person address to Battus seems to be modeled on Homeric apostrophes, moments when the epic narrator effaces (to whatever degree) the boundary between himself and the heroes of his narrative.⁵⁹ But in certain important respects, Pindar's apostrophe represents a break with Homeric usage. Homer's second-person addresses, whatever their motivation, invariably target characters who are active participants in the events that he is recounting, embedded in the what narratologists call the "story time." Thus the epic poet apostrophizes Menelaus as he prepares to battle Paris (*Iliad* 4.127, 146) or Achilles as he returns to the battlefield (*Iliad* 20.2).⁶⁰ Pindar's apostrophe in P. 4, by contrast, is addressed to the descendant of Euphemus foretold by Medea's prophecy, a man who will not be born for another seventeen generations (a number detailed in the introduction to Medea's embedded speech).⁶¹ Pindar is not so much eliding the distance between himself and his mythical characters, as is the effect in Homer, as he is introducing yet another temporal coordinate (albeit one already charted by Medea's trans-temporal voice).⁶² The poet, in the present,

⁵⁹ So Braswell 1988: 141.

⁶⁰ On Homeric apostrophe to embedded speakers, see above 50.

⁶¹ By contrast, an authentically epic apostrophe is used later in the poem, once the Argonaut narrative begins: τῶν μὲν κλέος ἐσλὸν Εὐφάμου τ' ἐκράνθη σόν τε, Περικλύμεν' εὐρυβία (174–5).

⁶² Mackie 2003: 59–60. Pindar regularly makes creative use of apostrophe. In addition to the more conventional apostrophes to *laudandi* in his epinicians, Pindar invokes a broad range of characters and objects, restructuring his vocal relationships in correspondingly engaging ways. Pindar apostrophizes the *laudandus* by name in twenty of his extant epinicians: O. 1.107; 5.21, 23; 6.12, 77, 81; 10.92–3; 11.11–12; 12.13, 18–19; 13.14, 43; P. 2.18–20; 3.80; 4.250, 298; 5.5–11, 14–22, 31; 7.17; 8.33, 80–1; 9.100; N. 1.28; 2.14–15; 5.43; 6.60–2; I. 4.2–3; 5.17–18. In addition, there are eight apostrophes to an unnamed addressee that seem to designate the *laudandus*: O. 1.114–15; P. 1.86–92; 2.57–72; 3.84; 4.255, 259, 263, 270; 8.35–8; N. 3.75, 83; 4.49, 80, 90. Bacchylides apostrophizes the *laudandus* in four out of fourteen epinician odes: 3.64, 92; 6.12–13, 16; 9.81–2; 13. 67–70. Pindar apostrophizes named figures other than the *laudandus* at: O. 6.22, 6.88; P. 5.45–54; 6.15–20; 8.72; N. 2.24–5; 5.41–2; 7.58; 8.44; I. 2.1, 31; 2.47–8 (πολίται); 7.31–4; 8.1 (νέοι); Pa. 6.121–2 (νέοι); Pa. 8.1 (seers); fr. 122.1–7 (young girls). Apostrophes to unnamed figures, not the *laudandus*: O. 1.18; 8.92 (Zeus?); 9.6–16, 40–1, 47–8, 54; 10.1–2; P. 4.277–8; 6.1; 10.51–2; 11.38; N. 1.13; 3.9–11 (Muse?); 4.36–7; 5.48–9 (unclear if to city or *laudandus*); 5.50–4; 7.77, 80–1; 9.34–7; 10.21; I.2.12; 3.15; 4.35; 5.24, 38–42, 51, 62–3; 7.20 (Thebes?); 8.7, 62; fr. 43?, Pa. 7b.2; Pa. 21.1–2; fr. 94b.76–7; fr. 107ab; fr. 180; fr. 188; fr. 194; fr. 215a. Places: O. 5.4; 8.1–2; 9.17; P. 2.1–3; 8.98; 12.1–5; N. 1.1–5; 7.50;

speaks to Battus, himself long dead, as a figure of the future as yet inconceivable to the dumbstruck Argonauts.⁶³

The introduction of a second-person addressee, a figure inhabiting a time and place distinct from both poet and his embedded speaker, offers yet another perspective on the relationship between the song's two performing voices. The critical role of the silent audience is underlined in the concluding *inquit* frame, where the reaction of the astonished Argonauts serves to resituate Medea's extended discourse within its mythical setting. These unheard addressees have been an integral, if at times forgotten, element of the embedded speech from the start, a fact that is recalled by the final word of Pindar's frame (κλύοντες 58), which echoes the injunction with which the Colchian began her own speech (κέκλυτε 13). The ring-composition is unusual in that it traverses the boundary between the speakers. As a seemingly organic conclusion to Medea's prophecy, Pindar's *inquit* coda is partially assimilated into the embedded speech. It might go unremarked upon that this connection is forged by means of the audience, listening in silence, if not for the apostrophe to Battus, which immediately problematizes the role of silent addressee.

By expanding the coordinates of those hearing the voices of his song, Pindar takes a different approach to the meditation on choral performance that he began through the cultivation of vocal parallels between himself and his embedded speaker. Battus, after all, is not only Pindar's addressee but the object of two other speakers within his song (Medea and the Pythia). If he is able to hear Pindar's words in contravention of the constraints of conventional chronology, why should he not hearken to those voices too? Vocal performance, as Pindar's conjuring of Medea has made clear, can radically reconfigure our perception of time. The temporal structures that govern the song's internal voices reflect on the external conditions by which (choral) performers are able to step into the other

I. 1.1–2, 6; 7.1–15; fr. 33c; Pa. 6.1–6, 10–11, 124–30, 132; fr. 76; fr. 96 (Sirios); fr. 195. Body parts or inanimate objects: O. 1.4–5; 2.1, 89; P. 1.1–10; 3.61–2; N. 3.26–8; 4.44; 5.3; fr. 123.1; fr. 127.3–4.

⁶³ Felson 1999: 19.

places and times of their vocal mimesis. Just as “Pindar” conjures the voice of Medea, so too the performers conjure the voice of the “poet.” By situating his apostrophe to Battus along a third spatio-temporal axis, Pindar gestures to the ways in which the audience, too, are implicated in – and facilitate – the shifting parameters of his song. The vocal impersonations of performers only take shape in conjunction with those who hear their voices – even, or especially, when their audience stands at a remove from the mimetic reality that their performance creates. By employing a technique from Homeric epic, Pindar invokes a tradition of poetic performance familiar to his audience and adapts its conceits to fit the theatrically recursive rhythms of his choral composition.

The apostrophe of Battus engages the audience in the vocal mimesis of choral performance, but it also sparks the integration of another set of voices, albeit ones which will not be heard in embedded speech. The most notable is that of the Pythian oracle, whose vocal role in the foundation of Cyrene is recounted for the third time (60–6).⁶⁴ But we also learn that Battus’ visit to Delphi will be motivated by his desire to seek a cure for his own vocal inadequacies (δυσθρόου φωνᾶς ἀνακρινόμενον 62). The honeyed voice of the Pythia and stuttering speech of Battus fill the void produced by the Argonauts’ dumb silence (57–8).⁶⁵ Pindar’s apostrophe bridges the two pasts of his narrative, placing the moment of Medea’s prophecy in a kind of dialogue with the voices that she herself has foretold. At the same time, the triangulating pivot of the poet in the present is also drawn to the fore. The actions of Battus are explicitly linked to those of his royal descendants (μετὰ καὶ νῦν 64)⁶⁶ and the poet’s role is, for the first time since the poem’s opening line, claimed in a bold first-person (ἀπὸ δ’ αὐτὸν ἐγὼ Μοίσαισι δώσω καὶ τὸ πάγχρυσον νάκος κριοῦ 67–8).⁶⁷ The merging of voices reaches its climax just as

⁶⁴ Calame 2014: 293–5.

⁶⁵ Segal 1986b: 41–2.

⁶⁶ Mackie 2003: 41.

⁶⁷ O’Higgins 1997: 117 observes how this phrasing that “incorporates a classically traditional stance towards the Muse ... within a framework that hints at a different

Pindar prepares to shift decisively to his epicizing narrative. The play surrounding Medea's speech will not be heard again until the concluding moments of the Argonaut tale,⁶⁸ but the temporal and geographic layering of voices that Pindar has created through the interweaving of Medea's embedded speech with his own provides a distinctively theatrical lens through which the subsequent narrative must be understood.

The tonal contrast of Pindar's two Argonaut tales is highlighted by the odd chronological relationship of Medea's off-set embedded speech to the more conventional narrative of Jason's adventures that follows. The initial *inquit* frame makes clear that Medea's embedded speech took place at some point towards the end of the Argo's return voyage from Colchis, not long before the ship made its triumphant homecoming in Iolcus. The moment dovetails with the conclusion of the narrator's subsequent narration, where Pindar drops his epicizing approach and finds the famous "short cut" (οἶμον βραχύν 248) that moves him briskly through the final elements of his tale, including a recapitulation of how the expedition leads ultimately to the founding of Cyrene (254–60).⁶⁹ Medea, though undoubtedly present in the later account, plays a minor role in Pindar's extended treatment of the Argonaut expedition, and hers is not amongst the many voices that speak in the (far more conventional) moments of embedded speech that are so liberally peppered throughout the tale.

With the abrupt truncation of the narrative at the very point when Medea had so dynamically intervened earlier in the poem, the two narrative modes are set in a kind of odd dialogue. The correspondence is underlined by Pindar's use of the second person (ὕμετέρας ἀκτίνος 255) in his brief description of the founding of Cyrene, harkening back to his apostrophe of Battus immediately following Medea's speech. As the long epicizing narrative draws to a close, the vivid voice of the embedded prophet – though absent – makes itself heard

relationship, in which the poem is a glorious concoction spontaneously offered as a tribute to the deities of song."

⁶⁸ On the possible vocal implications of the *ymx* charm (214), see Johnston 1995.

⁶⁹ On the shift in tone, see Nünlist 2007: 246.

again and with it the temporal complexity that is constitutive of Pindar's choral polyphony.

Conclusion

In P. 4 and the *Agamemnon* parodos we find the most extended and forceful demonstrations of the unique properties of embedded speech in Pindar and Aeschylus. The embedded speeches of these passages display the same unusual characteristics that are found throughout the work of both poets: complex vocal layering, temporal destabilization, unexpected juxtapositions, and the thematization of voice itself. The length and complexity of the embedded speeches in these two passages sustains the sophisticated development of the concerns at the heart of Pindar's and Aeschylus' distinctive approach to the device. These issues arise in the context of embedded speech throughout the extant works of both poets. But in the passages examined in this chapter, the temporal paradoxes are more vertiginous; the vocal harmonies more confounding; the impetus to think about the very nature of voice, and of song, more inescapable. These embedded speeches, and the recalibration of voice that they effect, challenge us to recognize the unorthodox chronologies that govern vocal performance. They rebuff our attempts to distinguish a single voice amongst the many mouthpieces joined in harmony and to discern a singular present moment – a true and authentic *here* and *now* of performance – within a song overladen with competing presents. The reduplication of voice permitted by embedded speech is brought to bear as a pointed reflection (conceptual, structural, programmatic) on the nature of song. Pindar and Aeschylus transform the ubiquitous and seemingly anodyne poetic technique into a paragon and paradigm for choral performance.

As voice – something critical to any definition of song – is refracted through the prisms of place and time, the notion of a distinct moment of song – a *here* and *now* of performance – is destabilized and placed under scrutiny. Each of the various interlocking voices brought to life within these songs brings its own distinct *here* and *now*. The unexpected,

Conclusion

and unexplained, harmonies implicitly fabricate a correspondingly fluid spatio-temporal foundation. The singular place and time of speech is reduplicated – like the embedded speech itself – rendered multiple, iterative, recursive. But Pindar and Aeschylus do more than simply multiply the coordinates of their songs. They layer place upon place, time upon time, so that the parameters of one *here* and *now* become indistinguishable from the other *heres* and *nows* (and *thens* and *theres*) that have also staked their claim to vocal immediacy within the poem.

Alongside the imbrication of the songs' spatio-temporal coordinates, the identities of those who give and are given voice is opened to uncertainty and re-examination. Vocal identity becomes a transformative property; something that can be lent and borrowed as voices past and future are recalled and reimaged in new and unexpected frames. The versatility of embedded speech, which allows surrogates to take up the voices of others, and permits figures of the past to share their speech, and identities, with those who reenact what has already been, becomes a paradigm for the poet's own chameleon-like choral compositions: an internal witness to the implications of composing a song to which others will give voice.

Reading the embedded speeches of these two poems side by side we move closer to apprehending how Pindar and Aeschylus might have talked to each other. The anachronistic harmonies of their embedded speeches model a kind of performance, but also a critical discourse, that is distinguished by elisions and fusions, by seamless shifts between voices and times. The tour-de-force passages of the *Agamemnon* parodos and P. 4 delineate the poets' conversation as one that cannot be measured by stable schematizations and firm statistics. The remaining chapters of this book will continue to follow the path demarcated by this preliminary formal analysis of embedded speech. But there are limits to what the voice can do on its own. In what follows, we will pursue the material metaphors and models of performance that give substance to the disembodied voices of embedded speech.

CHAPTER 3

VOCAL TOOLS

PYTHIAN 12, OLYMPIAN 13, *SEVEN AGAINST THEBES*

Up to this point, the conversation that I have been describing has been exclusively situated within the realm of voice. Embedded speech has served as a paradigm for and a portal into the ways that Pindar and Aeschylus join disparate voices across time and place, creating a song-scape that mirrors the recursive, polyphonous character of performance itself. We must now begin to expand the horizons of the conversation beyond merely vocal concerns. The embedded speeches of Calchas and Medea explored in the [last chapter](#) give little indication of how the prophetic voices of the past find their way to the mouths of their surrogates. The channels which enable the relationship between framer and framed remain opaque. Elsewhere, however, Pindar and Aeschylus show more of an interest in the means by which vocal surrogacy is achieved. Their thinking in this regard is marked by a pervasive interest in material conduits. In various ways, they seek to ground the seemingly ephemeral, even magical character of vocal expression in an insistent physical reality. The remaining chapters of this book will focus on the role that this material imagination plays in our poets' understanding of vocal performance. As we will see, the recursive rhythms and anachronistic harmonies of embedded speech represent only one dimension of a broader discourse on performance. In this discourse voice is paired with other, equally critical means by which performance is able to create a multilayered *here and now*.

In this first materially oriented chapter, we will see how both Pindar and Aeschylus frequently link vocal reenactment to the use of tools. Voice in these passages is imagined as the product of physical objects. The implements are drawn from a broad

range of applications. Musical instruments furnish a conceptual apparatus from within the world of song itself. Less proximate archetypes, such as tools of war and horsemanship, allow the poets to develop models of material transmission in less conventional directions. Whatever their application, the tools invoked within these songs lay claim to a physical presence that is at once literal and figurative. They are not physical props, strictly speaking, but these imagined objects nevertheless share the status of “animated actors of the inanimate” that Melissa Mueller has so persuasively explored with regards to the stage properties of tragic drama.¹ They stand as emblems at the juncture of practice and theory, material metaphors and metaphoric material that reflect on the way that performance is able to transmit and convey voice.

Before embarking on this materially informed discourse, we must first neutralize the temptation to view voice in binary opposition to substance. Despite often brilliant interventions from scholars of nearly every stripe,² the polarity between song and object – between ephemeral performance and durable material – remains difficult to conclusively dispel. The false opposition stems in part (though by no means exclusively) from an overly simplified notion of performance that it also serves to perpetuate. Song culture, according to this view, is incompatible with the fixity of material objecthood. Static and unmoving edifices, such as statues and temples, are antithetical to the organic dynamism of occasional song and dance. But the binary distinction voice/object (or performance/thing) breaks down in the face of certain objects that archaic Greek thought imbued with a lifelike power. Objects possessed of a voice that allows them to “speak” despite their material fixity. These speaking objects (*oggetti parlanti*)³ are often referred to as *agalmata*, a term that began as a designation of special

¹ Mueller 2015: 2.

² Within the field of Classics, one thinks especially of the sophisticated interventions of Thomas 1992, Steiner 1994, the contributions to Bakker and Kahane 1997, and Bakker 1997a, and now Butler 2015. Outside of Classics, see recently Sterne 2003, Dolar 2006, and Schlichter and Eidsheim 2014 with bibliography.

³ Burzachechi 1963. The term is adopted in the seminal article of Steiner 1993.

craft items dedicated to the gods but was later extended to a range of plastic images, such as paintings and sculptures, that were thought to transcend mere materiality in some way.⁴ As Deborah Steiner and others have so ably explored, *agalmata* and related objects play a vital role in the material imagination of Pindar and Aeschylus.⁵ The uncanny vocal properties of these *things*, to borrow the terminology popularized by Bill Brown,⁶ mirror the unsettled quality of songs that are at once lasting monuments and occasional displays, both performance and memorial, voice and object. They negotiate, and serve to blur, the boundary between static material possessions and ephemeral, embodied expressions. As Steiner observes, the invocation of *agalmata* produces “an intricate interplay between artefact and song” as poets “embed plastic representations in their works not so much to contest or challenge the image’s claim as to harness its powers.”⁷

The material objects that I explore in this chapter possess many attributes of *agalmata*. But, although they share the problematic materiality of their monumental counterparts, these objects are distinguished by their instrumental function. This is a distinct model of objecthood, characterized by an interest in *use* and unable to be reconciled to the commemorative discourse that attaches to *agalmata*.⁸ These objects are not inherently possessed of voice, but find voice in partnership with agents. They are tools; things to be taken up in hands and on bodies, things that perform in concert with a living agent: an operator, an actor. Whatever their ostensible function, these objects tend to serve as vocal conduits, transmitting voice from one speaker to another. They facilitate vocal surrogacy within

⁴ In addition to Steiner, see Svenbro 1988: esp. 30–2, Schlesier 2002, Day 2010: 85–129.

⁵ Steiner 2001 is a far-reaching analysis of the influence of plastic arts on poetic expression. In addition, on Pindar (and Bacchylides) specifically, see Steiner 1993, Steiner 1994: 91–100, Steiner 1998, Ford 2002: 113–30, and now Fearn 2017. On Aeschylus Steiner 1995, Scodel 1996, Wohl 1998: 71–90, Mitchell-Boyask 2006.

⁶ Brown 2003, Brown 2004, see also Latour 2005, Bennett 2010.

⁷ Steiner 2001: 251–2.

⁸ The instrumental materiality that Pindar and Aeschylus develop finds parallel in the notion of “functional memorials” developed by Rayner 2006: 87.

a complex network of other performers, establishing a model of how physical intermediaries join the disparate *heres* and *theres* and *nows* and *thens* of Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs.

A brief illustration will help to clarify what I mean. The passage is taken from the beginning of Pindar's O. 7 where, as so often, song commences with a meditation on poetic expression.⁹ Pindar constructs his reflections around the image of a cherished cup, passed from hand to hand at a symposium.

Φιάλαν ὡς εἴ τις ἀφνειᾶς ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἑλὼν
 ἔνδον ἀμπέλου καχλάζουσιν δρόσῳ
 δωρήσεται
 νεανίᾳ γαμβρῷ προπίνων
 οἴκοθεν οἴκαδε, πάγχρυσον, κορυφὰν κτεάνων,
 συμποσίου τε χάριν κᾶ-
 δὸς τε τιμάσαις ἑόν, ἐν δὲ φίλων
 παρόντων θῆκε νιν ζαλωτὸν ὁμόφρονος εὐνᾶς
 5
 καὶ ἐγὼ νέκταρ χυτὸν, Μοισᾶν δόσιν, ἀεθλοφόροις
 ἀνδράσιν πέμπων, γλυκὺν καρπὸν φρενός,
 ἰλάσκομαι,
 Ὀλυμπία Πυθοῖ τε νικῶν-
 10
 τεσσιν
 (O.7 1–10)

Just as if someone, taking from a wealthy hand a cup frothing with the dew of the grape, a golden cup, a prized possession, and gave it to a young bridegroom, first drinking from it from house to house, honoring the grace of the symposium and his marriage bond, and made him an object of envy for his assembled friends, because of his likeminded bed. So I, sending the poured nectar, the gift of the Muses, the sweet fruit of the mind, to prize-winning men, I gratify those who have been victorious at Olympia and Pytho.

The precious object is situated at the center of the celebration and its material luxury unmistakably hailed (πάγχρυσον, κορυφὰν κτεάνων). But the cup is not simply an object to be admired. It serves, as Kurke has shown, a crucial function as intermediary, first between the main figures of the symposium (the father and bridegroom) and subsequently between

⁹ On Pindar's elaborate opening images, see van Groningen 1958: 329–30, Maslov 2015: 310–17.

their family and those in the larger community.¹⁰ The cup passes between members of the family, solidifying their bond, and then from house to house (οἶκοθεν οἶκαδε, ἐν δὲ φίλων παρόντων θῆκε νιν ζαλωτόν), facilitating collective harmony. The cup serves a double function: it is a literal vessel, filled with wine, that permits the men to drink, but it is also a bridge between those present, a physical connection between hands and houses. Pindar exploits this twofold instrumentality to his own ends as the initial simile yields to the poetic scene for which it is an analogue. In claiming to pour the nectar of song (καὶ ἐγὼ νέκταρ χυτόν ... γλυκὺν καρπὸν φρενός), Pindar appropriates the cup – already a literal and figurative tool of the symposium – as an instrument for his own poetic expression.¹¹ The vessel becomes a conduit for the poet's liquid voice.

As with Pindar's image of a cup that can contain both wine and song, many of the tools deployed within the discourse of material instrumentality are drawn from the realm of song itself. The literal functionality of these objects, the physical *realia* employed within song culture, is adapted into figurative reflections on the instrumental transmission of voice. One particularly fertile source for such images is found in the musical instruments that facilitate poetic performance. Even before they are transformed into a model for vocal surrogacy, musical instruments are characterized by the interdependence of object and agent. Musical expression comes through the instruments, but is not strictly speaking theirs. The sounds come from others; the musicians who wield them, the figures whose voices the instruments imitate, the hands of the artisans who have crafted the tools.

Adapting the sonic transfer at the core of musical tools to the figurative realm, Pindar and Aeschylus envision instruments as material conduits of song and voice, aligning

¹⁰ Kurke 1991: 104–8 offers an elegant and influential analysis of the ways in which the image evokes the structures of archaic gift exchange.

¹¹ The image picks up on Homeric language of “pouring out” voice (χέει πολυδευκέα φωνήν *Od.* 19.521). Note the similar formulation at P. 12.10, discussed below 110. On Pindar's more general propensity to use sympotic imagery to describe song, see Crotty 1982: 83, Steiner 1986: 50, 119.

their functionality to the vocal surrogacy of embedded speech. The materiality of the instruments expands on the basic paradox of vocal reenactment, of a theatrical surrogacy that operates under the logic of not *not*. The sonic ventriloquism that Pindar and Aeschylus attribute to these musical tools does not follow a linear path. Sound stems from unseen sources and short-circuits traditional temporal structures. Like the mimetic framing speakers of their embedded speeches, these imagined instruments reproduce what has come before, performing anew the sounds and voices of others from elsewhere. They are a material channel through which voices of the past are brought into the present of performance. By attuning the tools of song to the iterative rhythms of choral performance, Pindar and Aeschylus are able to explore the mechanics of surrogacy from a distinctly material perspective.

In Pindar, tongue and lyre are commonly paired as kindred tools of the poet's craft and musical instruments are assigned a wide range of properties that testify to both their vocal and material nature. Critically, instruments can serve as a material bridge between poet and performer, a feature that is well demonstrated by the poet's instruction, at O. 1.17–18, for an unnamed attendant to take the Dorian lyre from its peg (ἀλλὰ Δωρίαν ἀπὸ φόρμιγγα πασσάλου λάμβαν').¹² The command casts the instrument as a metonym for the choral performance as a whole.¹³ The figure is a simple, yet telling one, and its belated placement within the ode – a call to begin that lags the beginning of song – betokens the temporal involutions that instruments are able to facilitate.¹⁴ A lengthier engagement with the lyre at the opening of P. 1 places emphasis on the instrument's relationship to a variety of agents. Exalting the power of Apollo's golden lyre, Pindar paints a comprehensive picture of the intermediary nature of the instrument – a thing that is worked by, and works on, all those who come in contact

¹² For discussion, see Felson Rubin 1984: 383–4, Nagy 1990: 94, Mackie 2003: 11, Prauscello 2012: 77, Eckerman 2011, Morgan 2015: 224–5.

¹³ Matzner 2016: 68–9.

¹⁴ The temporal dimensions of the passage are well explored by Morgan 1993: 2–3 (revisited at Morgan 2015: 224, esp. n. 22), D'Alessio 2004: 285, Sigelman 2016: 68–9.

with it.¹⁵ Around the lyre, invoked in the second person, Pindar weaves a varied cast of characters, each playing a different role in relation to the material object that connects them. Apollo and the Muses, as whose shared possession the instrument is introduced, represent an idealized image of musicians manipulating their tools.¹⁶ By contrast, singers and dancers “hear” and “obey” the instrument’s signals (σάμασιν), their performance crafted around the contours of the tool. Those in the audience (Zeus’ eagle, Ares, and the other gods) are enchanted and subdued by the reverberating strings (τεαῖς ῥιπταῖσι 9–10).¹⁷ Pindar’s use of the second person throughout the lengthy passage suggests that the lyre is not entirely without powers of its own. But whatever agency the poet assigns to the instrument is bound up in its position within a matrix of performers and spectators.¹⁸

A fragment from Aeschylus’ *Edonians*, a play which recounted the arrival of Dionysus and his disciple Orpheus at the court of Lycurgus, shares the emphasis on musical instruments as intermediaries set out in P. 1. Now mostly lost, the play is known to have been an important influence on Euripides’ *Bacchae*, and may well have anticipated the bold metatheatricity of the later play.¹⁹ Our longest fragment, an anapestic passage probably voiced by the Chorus, vividly describes the raucous new instruments that have been introduced alongside the worship of Dionysus.²⁰ At first the poet places the instruments in the hands of performers:

ὁ μὲν ἐν χερσὶν
βόμβυκας ἔχων, τὸρνον κάματον,

¹⁵ As Hooker 1977 argues, the lyre is an advocate (σύνδικον 2) that speaks for Apollo and the Muses. For an excellent recent discussion of the passage see Morgan 2015: 310–12 with bibliography.

¹⁶ Phillips 2016: 146 who sees the scene in the passage as “an analogue for (the) historical performance(s)” of the poem.

¹⁷ On the political implications, see Morgan 2015: 224–5.

¹⁸ Similar themes are explored at N. 4.44–7 ἐξύφαινε, γλυκεῖα, καὶ τόδ’ αὐτίκα, φόρμιγξ, / Λυδίᾳ σὺν ἁρμονίᾳ μέλος πεφλημένον / Οἰνῶνα τε καὶ Κύπρῳ, ἔνθα Τεῦκρος ἀπάρχει / ὁ Τελαμωνιάδας.

¹⁹ Sutton 1971, Aélion 1983: 249–57, West 1990: 30–1, Jouan 1992, Mureddu 2000, Geuss 2005.

²⁰ On the religious implications of the fragments, see Allan 2004: 139–40. On the Dionysiac discourse in visual representations of these instruments, see Castaldo 2009.

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δακτυλόδικτον πίμπλησι μέλος,
μανίας ἐπαγωγὸν ὁμοκλάν, 5
ὁ δὲ χαλκοδέτοις κοτύλαις ὀτοβεῖ
(fr. 57.2–6)

One man has in his hands the bombykes, wrought upon the turning-lathe, and fills a fingered song, the alluring shout of madness. Another man sounds the kotylae, bound in bronze.

The fragment paints a picture of various performers, each holding an instrument and adding his notes to the wild abundance of sound. Aeschylus describes the musician “filling” his song – perhaps with voice or breath, though the substance is never identified – as he manipulates the pipes, joining the material tool with something less immediately concrete. The image resembles the mix of material fixity and liquid fluidity found in Pindar’s description of the golden cup at the outset of O. 7, where the poet imagined himself pouring the nectar of song for his victor.²¹ Aeschylus’ emphasis on the fingered (δακτυλόδικτον, 4) character of the song affirms the indispensable role that the musician’s own body (cf. ἐν χερσίν, 2) plays in generating the instruments’ sound. The merging of disparate forces – material tool and liquid song – is unmistakably the product of human endeavor. In fact, the emphasis on human technicians here is twofold, extending beyond the musicians who bring song from the tools to recall the skilled artisans who made the objects. The bombykes (a type of low-tuned flute)²² are said to be “wrought upon the turning lathe” (τόρνου κάματον, 3), a detail that pointedly evokes the technical process of the instruments’ creation. Likewise, mention of the bronze bindings (χαλκοδέτοις 6) of the kotylae (cup-shaped cymbals) emphasize artisanal craft, drawing attention to the history of the instruments’ construction even as they are put to use by a musician in performance.

²¹ The parallel is even closer if we read the variant δακτυλοδικτῶν πίμπλησι μέλους, which casts the song as the liquid with which the instruments are filled, on which see Sommerstein 2008: 63.

²² The historical forms of the instruments mentioned in the passage are all discussed in West 1994: bombykes 90, kotylae 125, rhombi 122.

As the fearful sonic picture evolves, focus shifts from the performers to the sounds that the instruments (re)produce.

ψαλμός δ' ἀλαλάζει·
 ταυρόφθογγοι δ' ὑπομυκῶνται 10
 ποθεν ἐξ ἀφανοῦς φοβεροὶ μῆμοι,
 τυπάνου δ' εἰκῶν, ὥσθ' ὑπογαίου
 βροντῆς, φέρεται βαρυταρβῆς.
 (fr. 57.8–11)

*The psalmos cries out; the fearsome, bull-voiced mimics
 bellow from an unseen place and from the tympanos
 a terrible likeness is borne, as if of thunder from
 underground.*

The instruments do not simply generate noise, but *voice*. The lyre cries out as would a bacchant chorus. The verb ἀλαλάζω (7), with the exception of this passage, is used exclusively of the human voice throughout the archaic and classical periods.²³ The rhombi (whirling instruments spun at the end of a rope) bellow with the voices of bulls (ταυρόφθογγοι δ' ὑπομυκῶνται). These voices do not belong to the instruments alone. Rather they are imitations – mimetic reenactments – of others' voices. Aeschylus foregrounds the instruments' mimesis through his bold use of language. The bull-voiced rhombi are described by the striking periphrasis φοβεροὶ μῆμοι (9) and the drumming sound of the tympanos is an εἰκῶν ... βροντῆς (10–11). The instruments are vocal surrogates, bringing forth sounds from elsewhere.

Aeschylus describes the instruments' vocal mimesis in such a way as to exclude the human agents – the makers and musicians – who were so central to the earlier descriptions. The vocal surrogates of this later portion of the passage are thus cast in a vastly different light from those described earlier. Whereas the material qualities of the bombykes and kotylae were brought to the fore, Aeschylus' interest in the act of vocal surrogacy almost entirely obscures the materiality of the

²³ LSJ notes only 1 Corinthians 13:1, in addition to the passage under discussion, but cf. Eur. *Cyc.* 65 τυμπάνων ἀλαλαγμοὶ and Hel. 1349–52 γέλασεν δὲ θεὰ / δέξατό τ' ἐς χέρας / βαρύβρομον αὐλὸν / τερφθεῖσ' ἀλαλαγμῶι.

subsequent objects. As the physical reality of the instruments is obscured, so too agents who engage with the tools recede from view. In the non-mimetic descriptions of the first instruments, the hands of human craftsmen and performers were readily discerned. But the source from which the later instruments draw the power of vocal surrogacy remains unclear. The bovine voices of the *rhomboi* emerge from unseen sources (ποθὲν ἐξ ἀφανοῦς), the thunderous sound of the *tympanos* arises as if from underground (ὥσθ' ὑπογαίου). Just as identity becomes obscured by the vocal layering of embedded speech, so too the roles of those who take up the material facilitators of vocal surrogacy become uncertain, together with the objects themselves. When considered in light of their mimetic properties, the sounds of the instruments are frightening (εἰκὼν βαρυταρβῆς) as, indeed, are the objects themselves (φοβεροὶ μῆμοι). The once alluring (ἐπαγωγόν) performance is now filled with menace.

It is tempting to conclude that Aeschylus is describing two different categories of tool, so stark is the contrast between the clear functions of the human makers and musicians and the obscurity of the instruments' mimetic powers. But the two facets cannot be disentangled, however difficult it may be to reconcile them. The divergent descriptions provide multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon. They combine the seemingly discordant elements – human agency, material instruments, mimetic reenactment, and quasi-magical apparitions – into a single prismatic account. The sonic surrogacy of musical tools is not a simple question of craftsmanship or virtuosic performance, but human agents and material objecthood are nevertheless intrinsic to the instruments' function. The celebration of Dionysus through his mimetically potent instruments decisively affirms the importance of material tools in facilitating the reduplicative patterns of performance.²⁴ The instruments take

²⁴ Aeschylus' treatment in *Edonians* finds echo in the instruments of Pindar's *Dith.* 2, which I discuss in [Chapter 4](#).

on the theatrical properties of the god whom they honor, the patron of mimetic reenactment.

Athena's Handiwork

Mimesis through Tools

Nowhere is the intersection of musical instruments and recursive, looping temporality of theatrical reenactment more exhaustively explored, or unabashedly celebrated, than in Pindar's P. 12, a poem constructed around a sustained meditation on Athena's invention of the aulos, the reed pipe that served as the musical accompaniment to a wide array of choral forms.²⁵ In this novel reworking, perhaps wholesale invention, of the mythical tradition,²⁶ Pindar employs the aetiological narrative as a way of exploring the complex relationships – between craftsmen and objects, voice and materiality – that form around and through musical tools.

Like the instruments of Aeschylus' *Edonians*, the aulos of P. 12 is defined by its mimetic capacity. Mimesis is the reason for its very existence, as Pindar makes clear when he explains that the goddess fashioned the object “so that she might perform mimesis through tools”: σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ' (21). The apt phrase – mimesis through tools – neatly encapsulates the discourse of materially inflected surrogacy that informs all of the passages explored in this chapter. Created in commemoration of Perseus' beheading of the gorgon Medusa,²⁷ the aulos is a material memorial designed to perform, or rather, to reenact; to transmit and reproduce the voices of its own genesis.

The recursive temporality inscribed within the aulos at the moment of its creation gives shape, as Steiner has observed,

²⁵ On the aulos, see most recently Franklin 2013: 223–5, with bibliography.

²⁶ The tradition informing Pindar's composition is discussed by Wilson 1999: 87, Papadopoulou and Pirenne-Delforge 2001: 38, Steiner 2013: 195–9, Phillips 2016: 255–6.

²⁷ As Frontisi-Ducroux 1994 has observed, the description of the artifact's origins mirrors those of the gorgon blazon of Athena's aegis, also taken from Perseus at the completion of his toils. On the aegis itself as vocal “instrument,” see below 168–9.

to a narrative of repetitions and reduplications.²⁸ The iterative patterns of the ode mirror the mimetic tool at its center. The narrative is an object lesson, as it were, in the type of vocal replication facilitated by the instrument. Most conspicuously, Pindar describes the invention of the aulos twice. The replication is not of the familiar theme-and-variation form found throughout archaic Greek poetry, but rather entails a full-scale retelling of the object's creation.²⁹ The involute chronology of both object and narrative permits a shifting perspective on the tool's materiality, while the appearance of human performers at the narrative's conclusion ensures that human agents are integrated into this picture of immortal mimesis. The single instrument, viewed through multiple lenses over the course of the song, contains disparate qualities akin to those that Aeschylus explores in his catalogue of instruments in *Edonians*. By allowing us to see the mimetic tool at the moment of its creation, Pindar gives shape to the mimetic origins that were obscured in Aeschylus' play. Yet for all of the detail that Pindar presents in these descriptive iterations, the material substance of the aulos remains insistently uncertain.³⁰

In his first account of the invention, Pindar describes Athena as weaving the aulos from the lament of the gorgons.

τάν ποτε
 Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν <Γοργόνων>
 οὔλιον θρήνον διαπλέξαισ' Ἀθάναν·
 τὸν παρθενίους ὑπὸ τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς
 αἶε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέι σὺν καμάτῳ, 10
 Περσεύς ὁπότε τρίτον αὔσεν κασιγνητᾶν μέρος
 ἐνναλίᾳ Σερίφῳ λαοῖσι τε μοῖραν ἄγων.
(P.12.6–12)

²⁸ Steiner 2013: esp. 183–6, see also Phillips 2013: 37–42, Phillips 2016: 256–63.

²⁹ Steiner 2013: 184 explains that “the poet returns at line 18 to his point of departure and re-visualizes, or re-sounds, his earlier account of Athena’s act of invention.”

³⁰ In a related vein, LeVen 2014: 110 emphasizes the conspicuous absence of Athena’s body: “nothing is said about the looks of the maiden who invented the aulos, but the parthenos (19) is recalled by the evocation of Medusa and her sisters, described by their terrifying maidenly heads (παρθενίους πλάτοις κεφαλαῖς, 9), their beautiful cheeks (εὐπαράου κράτα, 16), and the fastness of their jaws (ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων, 20).”

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*Which once Pallas Athena discovered, weaving the baleful
lament of the arrogant gorgons, which [she?] heard pouring
from under the maidens' terrible heads of snakes with piteous
toil, when Perseus called upon the third part of the sisters
bringing fate to the men on sea-girt Seriphos.*

As Clay notes, the image of weaving (διαπλέξαισ' 8) fits well with the aulos, an instrument constructed of multiple materials and capable of producing multiple tones at once.³¹ But the object described here hardly invokes the physical properties of the aulos familiar to fifth-century musicians and their audiences. The material that Athena transforms is voice itself, the οὔλιον θρῆνον that the gorgons pour out (λειβόμενον) in their grief.³² The material out of which the aulos is constructed is nothing other than the voices which it will serve to reproduce in song.

In the second iteration, voice is again imagined as something material and substantive, constitutive of the instrument that will replicate it.

ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἐκ τούτων φίλον ἄνδρα πόνων
ἔρρύσατο παρθένος αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος,
ὄφρα τὸν Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων 20
χριμφθέντα σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ' ἐρικλάγκταν γόον.
(P. 12.18–21)

*But when the virgin had rescued her beloved man from these
toils, she fashioned the all-voiced (πάμφωνον) song of the aulos
so that she might imitate with her instruments the
loud-sounding lament brought close to her out of the ravenous
jaws of Euryale.*

The mimetic capacity of the aulos, left implicit in the first account, is here made explicit. The tool will allow Athena to reenact Euryale's cry (σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ' ἐρικλάγκταν γόον). The material worked by the goddess retains its vocal properties: the οὔλιον θρῆνον of her earlier weaving matched here

³¹ Clay 1992: 520–4. On the various oppositional forces in the ode, see Segal 1994 reprinted in Segal 1998: 84–104.

³² Crotty 1982: 83 draws an explicit connection between λειβόμενον and the song poured into the golden cup of O. 7. Steiner 2013: 180 sees allusion to the pouring forth of tears in the context of the gorgons' lament. Phillips 2016: 257–8, with bibliography at n. 54, observes that οὔλιον can carry a sense of repetitive action, further underscoring the iterative rhythms of the passage.

by the ἐρικλάγκταν γόον that Euryale pours forth through the mouths of the terrible serpents atop her head. The intermediary role of the snakes, made explicit in the first description (τὸν παρθενίοις ὑπὸ τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς ... λειβόμενον), is reiterated here through the reference to jaws in the plural (ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων). The gorgons' expression already relies on vocal surrogacy, finding voice through the living tools that define their horrible bodies and terrible powers. These shrieking mouths, at once distinct from Euryale's body and an essential part of it, are endowed (though Pindar makes no mention of the fact) with the capacity to turn living creatures to stone, to transform men into objects. The sound that they produce moves towards the goddess (χριμφθέντα) like a thing or a body. But the aulos will resist transformation into inanimate, and voiceless, materiality. Voice may produce the tool, but with it, voice is reproduced, since the product of Athena's labors is, properly speaking, voice, the "all sounding song" (πάμφωνον μέλος 19).

Throughout the narrative of the object's creation, the material substance of the aulos is insistently and exclusively conceived of as a question of voice. The aulos is a material means of reproducing the gorgon's lament, but it is a tool made of voice.³³ The parameters of description shift, however, when the mimetic powers of the tool are put to the test. Athena's creation of the aulos as a πάμφωνον μέλος has already produced one reenactment; the vocal mise en abyme that replicates the gorgons' foundational articulation in the sonic and material substance of the instrument. As the narrative draws to its close, Pindar contextualizes this mimetic feedback loop within a more specific temporal structure by making explicit that the goddess intended for the aulos be used in future performances – further instrumental renewals of the gorgon's cry to match that of Athena's invention.³⁴

³³ It is noteworthy in this regard that the aulos, unlike the lyre, "blocked up and barricaded the mouth, robbing its master of both voice and speech" as Wilson 1999: 87 notes.

³⁴ Steiner 2013: 176–7, Phillips 2016: 257.

Vocal Tools

εὔρεν θεός· ἀλλὰ νιν εὐροῖσ' ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν,
ὠνύμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλὰν νόμον,
εὐκλεᾷ λαοσσῶν μναστῆρ' ἀγώνων,

λεπτοῦ διανισόμενον χαλκοῦ θαμὰ καὶ δονάκων, 25
τοὶ παρὰ καλλίχορον ναίοισι πόλιν Χαρίτων
Καφισίδος ἐν τεμένει, πιστοὶ χορευτᾶν μάρτυρες.
(P. 12.22–7)

The god discovered it, but she discovered it for mortal men to have, and she named it the melody of many heads, a famed memorial of contests that rouse men, [a song?] often passing through delicate bronze and reeds that live in the city of the Graces, famed for its choruses, in the grove of Cephisus, trusted witnesses of song.

This coda links Athena's mimetic invention to the performances of human musicians. The goddess produced the instrument "so that she might perform mimesis through tools," but also "for mortal men to have" (νιν εὐροῖσ' ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν). It is here, in the hands of mortals like the aulete Midas for whom the ode was composed, that the aulos takes on its familiar (to mortals) material form as a thing of "slender bronze and reeds."³⁵ The source for the instrument is not located at the ends of the earth, but grows happily in Orchomenos, the city of the Graces.³⁶ Alongside this newly refamiliarized description of the tool, the scope of its powers shifts. As a possession of mortal men, the physical instrument must be replicated to fill the demands of its multiple owners. The tool itself will be reproduced, the material instrument spawning its own imitative progeny to be played alongside choruses wherever men perform. It is no longer a singular tool woven of the gorgon's voice, but a duplicable product formed of common and readily acquired material. The now-multiplied auloi will be used again and again, the breath of musicians passing often (θαμὰ) through their bodies of metal and grass. Just as the instrument

³⁵ Clay 1992: 524, Steiner 2013: 190–1. On the possible resonances of δόναξ in performance, see Gentili and Luisi 1995.

³⁶ Segal 1994: 32. The instrument is not entirely domesticated, however. If *πιστοὶ χορευτῶν μάρτυρες* (27, “faithful witnesses of song”) refers to the reeds, as I think it must, the material retains some of its earlier anthropomorphic character.

is a material record of (the moment of) Euryale's cry, so Pindar declares it will also be a remembrance of human musical endeavor (λαοσσόων μναστῆρ' ἀγώνων 24).³⁷

It is within this pointedly mortal portion of the poem that we learn the name that Athena gave to her creation: the "many-headed melody" (κεφαλαῖν πολλὰν νόμον). The term is a technical reference to a specific style of aulos composition popular in the early fifth century, but it resonates in multiple ways within Pindar's polyphonic song.³⁸ Not only does it recall the πάμφωνον μέλος of Pindar's second description of the instrument, but also the snake-haired head(s) who lend their voices to the instrument (παρθενίοις ὑπό τ' ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς). Now, in light of the mortals who will take up possession of the tool, the many heads of the imitated voice become the many heads of the performers who will imitate. The instrument serves as bridge between the gorgons and those who renew their voice through the breath of the aulos. Each performance becomes a reenactment of the gorgons' cry of grief, but also of Athena's founding mimetic act, weaving new, mortal voices into the vocal tapestry out of which the instrument was first composed.

Performing the Bridle

If the cries of the gorgons, made new through the goddess' artisan craft, inscribe a "before" into the aulos, the temporal dimension of instrumental mimesis is even more pronounced in the tool around which Pindar crafts his mythical narrative in O. 13. The song recounts how Bellerophon tamed the winged horse, Pegasus, in order to escape from Corinth and prove his valor fighting against the Amazons and the Chimera in the east. Pindar's narrative focuses not on the hero's martial achievements, which are dispatched in a brief catalogue at the close of the tale (86–90), but on the means by which he was

³⁷ Steiner 2013: 184–5, Phillips 2016: 257–63.

³⁸ On the later history of the "nome," see LeVen 2014: 60–70, 109–10, Phillips 2013: 38–41, Steiner 2013: 186–94.

able embark on his exploits. The story hinges on a material tool, a gold-filleted bridle furnished by the goddess Athena. Although its connections to the world of song are less overt, the bridle, like the aulos, reflects on the ways that song takes shape through material conduits. An instrument of replication and reenactment, the equine tool extends the model of recursive performance to a more expansive and insistently figurative level. As we will see, the repeated “discoveries” of the bridle reproduce the syncopated temporalities of theatrical reenactment. The critical role of this intermediary object in facilitating the disparate performances within the mythical narrative finds harmony in Pindar’s assertion that his own song is endowed with a material dimension that enables its continued claim to voice.

Pindar dwells on the bridle at length, looking first to the moment of its presentation by the goddess and then to the slow process by which Bellerophon comes to understand its purpose. His narrative traces the bridle as it moves in time and space, considering the material tool from a variety of perspectives. Like the aulos, the equine instrument is reconstituted and redefined as it is put to different uses. Bellerophon receives the object in incomprehension and must learn of the bridle’s powers on his own. His developing understanding of how to *perform* with and through the material object underlines the uncertain connection between the makers and users of tools. The mediating properties of the bridle, an instrument designed to join man and horse, are turned back on the mediated relationship between Bellerophon and Athena. It becomes a tool of surrogate agency, permitting Bellerophon to reperform, and thus reaffirm, the goddess’ act of creation.

The bridle is not an instrument of vocal mimesis, like the aulos of P. 12.³⁹ Nevertheless, voice is central to Pindar’s picture

³⁹ Pindar’s account of the bridle is, however, joined with that of the aulos insofar as Pegasus is the offspring of Medusa, a fact that Pindar prominently underlines at the outset of the Bellerophon narrative (ὅς [sc. Bellerophon] τὰς ἀφιδέας υἱὸν ποτε Γοργόνος ἢ πόλλ’ ἀμφὶ κρουνοῖς Πάγασον ζευξαι ποθέων ἔπαθεν 63–4). Indeed, later accounts place the winged horse’s birth at the moment of the gorgon’s beheading by Perseus, making Pegasus a kind of living parallel to the aulos of P. 12.

of the tool. The vocal dimension is underscored at the bridle's first appearance. Where one might expect to find a description of the instrument's fabrication or of the function of the object, Pindar gives us a speech. The voice of Athena, presented in the vivid present of embedded speech, begins the mythical account by breaking through the impasse of Bellerophon's impotent desires.

ὅς τ᾽ αἶς ὀφιώδεος υἱ-
 ὄν ποτε Γοργόνος ἥ πόλλ' ἀμφὶ κρουνοῖς
 Πάγασον ζεῦξαι ποθέων ἔπαθεν,
 πρὶν γέ οἱ χρυσάμπυκα κούρα χαλινόν 65
 Παλλὰς ἤνεγκ', ἐξ ὀνείρου δ' αὐτίκα
 ἦν ὕπαρ, φώνασε δ'· "Εὐδεις Αἰολίδα βασιλεῦ;
 ἄγε φίλτρον τόδ' ἵππειον δέκευ,
 καὶ Δαμαίῳ νιν θύων ταῦρον ἀργάεντα πατρὶ δεῖξον."
 (O. 13.63–9)

[Bellerophon,] who once suffered from a great desire to yoke the son of the snaky Gorgon beside the spring, until the maiden Pallas brought him a golden-filleted bridle coming as a true vision from a dream, and spoke: "Are you sleeping, Aiolid king? Come, take this equine charm and, sacrificing a shining bull, share it with your father, the Breaker."

The clarity of Athena's voice matches her definitive understanding of the bridle. Her speech is a vocal correlate of the power that she recognizes in the gift. The vividness of embedded speech is emphasized by the inclusion of multiple indexical markers, lending a concision and vitality that makes the goddess' voice stand out even further within the ode. Athena links her voice to her addressee, Bellerophon, first through the use of a forceful second-person interrogative and vocative combination (εὐδεις ... βασιλεῦ;) and then through a series of densely packed imperatives (ἄγε, δέκευ, δεῖξον). She confers the same vivid presence on the object that she has brought with her, referring to the bridle with a deictic signal (φίλτρον τόδ' ἵππειον). The vocal performance brings the object into reality. The embedded speech conjures Athena's presence, and she, in turn, calls the bridle into being through her voice. The bridle is a material marker of the truth of the goddess' nocturnal

epiphany.⁴⁰ But in contrast with subsequent narrative tradition, Athena's vocal epiphany is devoid of any indication of the goddess' bodily presence.⁴¹ The "equine charm" supplies a physical dimension that is lacking in the voice that creates it. From the vantage of its divine creation/bestowal, the bridle gives material form to Athena's speech act. In her absence it will remain, a material representative of what was said.

But before we can turn to the bridle's future, we must consider the past already contained within Athena's speech. The abrupt question, εὔδεις, with which Pindar's Athena begins her address to Bellerophon is an unmistakable echo of divine dream apparitions in Homeric epic who rouse their addressees with the same first word.⁴² Athena's voice may inaugurate Pindar's narrative, but her stark instructions, brought clearly into the *here* and *now* through the use of embedded speech, are also a vocal reenactment of Homer's dream scenes. The "before" contained in the words with which the goddess equips Bellerophon for his future is a critical reminder of the recursive structures that enable all performance, even when intended as a prototype for subsequent reenactments. The formal properties of embedded speech mean that, by necessity, the voice we hear reenacts a vocal performance from another time (in this case, Athena's voice from the mythical past). The Homeric quotation redoubles the syncopated temporality of the speech by juxtaposing the mythical past of Athena's epiphany with the poetic past of the hexameter models that help to shape Pindar's choral expression. Both Athena's voice and the bridle it creates are performative palimpsests taking their place in a sequence that has evolved over time.

Athena's performative citation of Homeric speech, which establishes the bridle as a (product of) reenactment even before

⁴⁰ Harris 2009: 43.

⁴¹ On purely vocal epiphanies see Vernant 1974, Dickson 1990, also Pucci 1998: chap. 5 and Pucci 1994.

⁴² Most famous is the false dream that appears to Agamemnon at *Il.* 2.22ff.: εὔδεις Ἀτρεὺς υἱὲ δαΐφρονος ἱπποδάμοιο; The same line-initial interrogative is used in Patroclus' ghostly apparition to Achilles at *Il.* 23.68ff. and Athena's appearance to Penelope at *Od.* 4.803ff. Aeschylus employs the same allusion in the dream apparition of the ghost of Clytemnestra at *Eum.* 94.

it comes into Bellerophon's hands, calls two important features of Pindar's tale into relief. The first is the unusual coupling of dream epiphany and material gift. By the Hellenistic period the *apport*, the technical term applied to confirmative dream-gifts, was a common device in incubation narratives (in which a mortal suppliant sleeps in the temple of a god from whom he seeks aid). But *apports* are found nowhere in Homer, nor indeed are they found in any extant source before Pindar.⁴³ Although it might seem unremarkable that Pindar pairs Athena's dream speech with a material marker in the form of the bridle, the choice is in fact a striking departure from earlier narrative conventions, epic above all. The close vocal echo of Homer's dream paradigm in Athena's speech calls attention to Pindar's break with tradition. The pairing of voice and object, where previously voice alone would suffice, signals a novel concern with the use of material tools to convey speech.

The form of Athena's address may invoke the familiar topos of dream apparitions in Homer's epics, the identity of her addressee suggests a quite different set of precedents which are no less significant to the discussion at hand. If Athena's bridle is unparalleled in Homeric dream scenes, the object claims an undeniable poetic genealogy in traditional stories about Bellerophon. As a subject of mythical narrative, Bellerophon is linked with unusual frequency to powerful objects, most often in order to thematize communication through material intermediaries. Throughout archaic literature he is a paradigm of the dangers of illiteracy.⁴⁴ He is disastrously incapable of understanding speech in material form. One recurrent motif, repeated in various guises, casts Bellerophon as the conduit of written messages that he cannot himself understand.⁴⁵ This motif finds its earliest extant expression in the *Iliad*, where

⁴³ In fact, Pindar's O. 13 is the first extant instance in Greek literature of an *apport* left to confirm a dream epiphany. Harris 2009: 43.

⁴⁴ Rosenmeyer 2001: 40–4.

⁴⁵ As Rosenmeyer 2001: 240–1 details, the very name Bellerophon became synonymous with false or harmful letters. On the possible interpretations of the Homeric Bellerophon episode by fifth-century tragedians, see Easterling 1985: 5, and on Euripides specifically, see Oakley 1988: 284 n. 2.

Glaucus recounts his forebear's lucky escape from the death ordered by the baleful symbols (σήματα λυγρὰ 6.168) inscribed on a tablet delivered to his would-be executioner. Homer's inset narrative is an important reflection of archaic worries about the power of the written word, a theme that runs throughout the poem.⁴⁶ Pindar elides the question of writing *per se* in O. 13, but his interest in the bridle is undoubtedly informed by this tradition. Although it is not literally inscribed with her words, the bridle is a material manifestation of Athena's speech. The object allows Pindar to reimagine Bellerophon's characteristic incomprehension of material communication as a question of performance. In order to comprehend the tool, Bellerophon will need to step into the sequence of vocal surrogacy and undertake a performative reduplication of his own.

Bellerophon's incomprehension emerges from the moment that Athena's speech is concluded. The isolation of embedded speaker, characteristic of embedded speech throughout Pindar and Aeschylus, is here developed into a confoundingly disjointed relationship between speaker and addressee. The language with which the speech is framed highlights the divergent perspectives of the two agents. The introduction to Athena's speech stresses the veracity of her appearance as a ὕπαρ, a true vision from within a dream.⁴⁷ The simple and unambiguous *inquit* frame casts her speech as an equally authentic expression: ἐξ ὀνείρου δ' αὐτίκα ἦν ὕπαρ, φώνασε δ' (66–7). At the close of the speech, however, the focalization shifts to Bellerophon, whose wordless response to Athena's address will comprise the remainder of the narrative. For Bellerophon, Athena's speech is attended by uncertainty. To the sleeping hero, the goddess only *seems* to have spoken.

κυάναιγίς ἐν ὄρφνῃ
κνώσσοντί οἱ παρθένος τόσα εἰπεῖν
ἔδοξεν·

70

(O. 13.70–2)

⁴⁶ Ford 1992: 154–5, Steiner 1994: 15, Rosenmeyer 2001: 40–4, Bader 2006, D'Alfonso 2008.

⁴⁷ The risks of trusting in a false dream are made evident from the Homeric allusion to Agamemnon's folly in *Iliad* 2. Cf. n. 42 above.

Athena's Handiwork

These things the virgin of the dark-aegis seemed to say to him slumbering in the night.

The closing frame reflects Bellerophon's perception of the divine epiphany. He is unsure of what has happened and of what he has heard. The language of semblances (ἔδοξεν) casts Athena's speech act into question. She *appears* to speak. Her voice creates the impression of presence. As if in a performance, she has not *not* spoken. Indeed, the speech is a performance. As we have seen, the goddess' epiphany is a vocal mimesis of Homeric epic. Although the allusion apparent to Pindar's audience may not inform Bellerophon's response, his sense of uncertainty, of a voice seeming to be, will ultimately carry the hero into the performative not *not* from which the voice takes shape. Bellerophon must make sense of what Athena *seemed* to say and his tool in doing so will be the bridle that she has left him. This too will be a performance, one in which Bellerophon will seek to belatedly recreate the conditions of Athena's "original" vocal enactment.

When Bellerophon wakes from his slumbers, his eagerness for action takes him in an unexpected direction. He does not immediately rush off to master the long-desired stallion. Nor does he undertake the sacrifice to Poseidon as Athena instructed him to do. Instead, gathering the bridle from his side, Bellerophon goes in search of a seer who can interpret what has happened for him.⁴⁸

κνώσσουντί οἱ παρθένος τόσα εἰπεῖν
ἔδοξεν· ἀνὰ δ' ἔπαλτ' ὀρθῶ ποδί.
παρκείμενον δὲ συλλαβὼν τέρας,
ἐπιχώριον μάντιν ἄσμενος εὔρεν,
δεῖξέν τε Κοιρανίδα πᾶσαν τελευ-
τὰν πράγματος, ὥς τ' ἀνὰ βωμῶ θεᾶς
κοιτάξαστο νύκτ' ἀπὸ κεί-
νου χρήσιος, ὥς τέ οἱ αὐτά
Ζηνὸς ἐγγχεικεραίνουν παιῖς ἔπορεν
δαμασίφρονα χρυσόν.

75

(O. 13.71–8)

⁴⁸ Suarez de la Torre 1988: 78: "En realidad, más que interpretar, Polido aconseja acerca del ensueño y prescribe el procedimiento a seguir; es decir, ratifica la validez y el origen divino de aquél." So also Jouan 1995: 280, Nünlist 2007: 237–8.

Vocal Tools

*Such things did the virgin seem to say to him as he slept.
He lept up on straight foot, and taking up the portent lying
beside him, was happy to find the local seer and revealed to
him, the son of Coiranis, the entirety of the affair, how he
slept the night beside the goddess' altar at his bidding, and
how the child of thunder-hurling Zeus herself gave him the
mind-subduing gold.*

The divergent perspectives of goddess and hero are immediately evident in the language that is now applied to the bridle. Where Athena had seen an equine charm (φίλτρον ἵππειον) capable of enchanting the horse Bellerophon longs to master, the hero sees a portent (τέρας) in need of explanation. Discovering the local seer, Polydios, Bellerophon makes his revelation (δείξεν) to this mortal interlocutor, not to Poseidon as Athena had instructed (πατρὶ δείξον 69).⁴⁹ Bellerophon's act of misplaced disclosure is in fact a vocal reenactment of Athena's epiphany, a performance in which the hero recapitulates the entire affair (πᾶσαν τελευτὴν πράγματος) as he experienced it the night before. Bellerophon's speech, a belated rejoinder to Athena, offers repetition in place of response. The hero's voice is not conveyed in the vivid present of embedded speech, as Athena's was. Instead his words, and the paired response of the seer (79–82), are conveyed in rough paraphrase. However obliquely they may be discerned, these vocal reperformances confirm the power of Athena's speech and tool by transforming it into something that can be spoken, and repeated, by mortal tongues. They establish a basis for human action even though, as the seer asserts, “the power of the gods accomplishes all” (τελεῖ δὲ θεῶν δύναμις κτλ. 83). Revoicing Athena's speech as their own, Bellerophon and Polydios create a space in which the bridle can also be repurposed, where the divine *apport* becomes a tool of human hands. The tool has transmitted the goddess' voice and transformed the men into her vocal surrogates in the process.

⁴⁹ As Dodds 1951: 111–14 notes, this type of “secondary elaboration” was not uncommon with ambiguous dreams received through incubation, but it is hard to see that Bellerophon's experience would need such clarification. See also Harris 2009: 23–8.

The effect of the mortal reperformances is evident in the evolving terminology that is applied to the bridle as, over the course of his exchange with Polydios, the materiality and power of the object become increasingly apparent to Bellerophon. Already in his first description of the tool to Polydios, Bellerophon gives firmer shape to the uncertain τέρας that he awoke to find. Identifying the object as mind-conquering gold (δαμασίφρων χρυσός), Bellerophon can recognize its material properties and subjugating power. But even as Bellerophon begins to incorporate elements of the goddess' speech into his own vocal reenactment of the dream apparition, he still cannot clearly discern the bridle's application as tool. Like the golden lyre of P. 1, the golden bridle exerts its power in all directions, enchanting all who come into contact with it.⁵⁰ It is only through the seer's response, instructing Bellerophon to place his trust in the dream vision (ἐνυπνίῳ δ' ἄ τάχιστα πιθέσθαι κελήσατό νιν 79–80), that the instrumental function of the bridle comes into view for the hero.

ἦτοι καὶ ὁ καρτερὸς ὄρ-
μαίνων ἔλε Βελλεροφόντας,
φάρμακον πραῦ τείνων ἀμφὶ γένυι, 85
ἵππον πτερόεντ'.

(O. 13.83–6)

*And then the mighty Bellerophon eagerly took possession
of the winged horse, stretching the gentle drug around
his jaw.*

Once the seer has recapitulated Athena's instructions, Bellerophon is able to place the bridle on Pegasus. The poet's description of the tool as a "gentle drug" (φάρμακον πραῦ) applied to the winged horse (ἵππον πτερόεντ') completes the ring begun by Athena's φίλτρον ἵππειον (68), as the bridle once again takes the form that the goddess ascribed to it at the moment of its presentation. Polydios' speech rouses Bellerophon to the action that was deferred following Athena's vocal performance. The seer stands as an intermediary between the divine and

⁵⁰ On the bridle's power to enchant, see Dickson 1986.

mortal worlds,⁵¹ but it is the balanced exchange between mortal interlocutors – a dialogue that recasts the vivid but isolated address of the goddess in a different type of reperformance – that gives new shape to the object between them.

The primary function of a bridle is to join two disparate bodies – the rider and his horse – uniting them in a shared endeavor. But over the course of Pindar's narrative, Athena's bridle reveals its bridging function to be of broader scope than its non-poetic counterparts. It is not only the relationship between Bellerophon and Pegasus, but also those between Bellerophon and Athena, and Bellerophon and Polydios, which the divine tool serves to facilitate.⁵² By means of their shared object, these vocal performers are able to work together towards a common goal, each reenacting a performance of the past by means of the material conduit.

The bridle, like the musical instruments of *Edonians*, operates along a variety of interconnected levels. Athena, who presides over the tool's appearance, sees its function clearly and can look forward to its future use. Bellerophon, taking possession of the unfamiliar object, must look back to the past – to the bridle's origins – in order to put the tool to use. He must reenact Athena's performance of and with the tool before he is capable of accomplishing his own. The ode lingers on the uneasy connection between the tool's creator and subsequent user.⁵³ It invites speculation as to how a material object is able to facilitate communication between these two agents, how the same tool is able to be a shared possession of such different figures. The bridle creates a performance that looks both forward and back. It is a conduit through which to reenact events from the past and at the same time a means to accomplish performances not-yet achieved.

⁵¹ Hubbard 1986: 33, Jouan 1995: 281.

⁵² Pegasus' function within the narrative is much like that of the bridle, a tool through which Bellerophon is able to act. The conflation is highlighted at 87, where the instrumental σύν δὲ κείνῳ may be taken to refer to both horse and bridle.

⁵³ Dickson 1986: 131 observes that what "emerges from the myth in *Olympian* 13 is the suggestion that the function of the bridle is not so much an instrument of dominance as of revelation."

Pindar has, in fact, signaled his interest in the prismatic qualities of the material bridle well before beginning his account of Bellerophon's travails. In a programmatic discussion of inventions at the close of the first triad, the poet turns his thoughts to the victor's homeland, lauding Corinth for its threefold claim to technical invention. The catalogue introduces the themes of shifting materiality and collaboration over time that will inform the subsequent narrative of the bridle.

πολλὰ δ' ἐν καρδίαις ἀνδρῶν ἔβαλον
 ὦραι πολυάνθεμοι ἄρ-
 χαῖα σοφίσμαθ', ἅπαν δ' εὐρόντος ἔργον.
 ταὶ Διωνύσου πόθεν ἐξέφανε
 σύν βοηλάτῃ χάριτες διθυράμβω;
 τίς γὰρ ἵππείοις ἐν ἔντεσσιν μέτρα,
 20 ἢ θεῶν ναοῖσιν οἰωνῶν βασιλέα διδυμον
 ἐπέθηκ';
 (O. 13.16–22)

Many ancient contrivances did the many-blossomed Hours place in the hearts of men [there]. And all of the work belongs to the discoverer. Whence appeared the graces with the bull-winning dithyramb of Dionysus? And who set the measures for equine implements, or the double king of birds on the temples of the gods?

The three areas of innovation identified in the passage cover a range of human endeavor: poetry, war-craft, sacred architecture. The picture aligns three seemingly distinct forms. The broadly resonant terms with which the inventions are introduced, *σόφισμα* and *ἔργον*, are appropriately vague, signaling both an action and its material result. The first item, the choral spectacle of the dithyramb, is a work of song and dance, of voice and bodies.⁵⁴ At the close of the catalogue, architectural innovation reflects the opposite pole, a fixed monument worked in stone or metal, though tellingly Pindar does not draw attention to the inanimate material, preferring instead to focus on the “double king of birds,” a phrase generally understood to refer to the temple's gables but which gestures towards

⁵⁴ Mullen 1982: 209–20.

the living bodies that so often complicate Pindaric notions of architectural fixity.⁵⁵ Between these two poles stands the *metron*, the bridle, a mediating tool endowed with both tangible and kinetic properties.⁵⁶ It is fixed (ἑπείθηκε) like the finials upon the temple, but imbued with the animate mobility of the beasts on which it will be used (ἵππείοις ἐν ἔντεσσιν).

The amalgamation of these three disparate forms under the same heading is justified by the crisply enigmatic observation that introduces the catalogue: ἅπαν δ' εὐρόντος ἔργον. The universalizing pronouncement has critical implications for our understanding of the Bellerophon narrative, as well as for the catalogue it inaugurates. Despite the definitive tone of the claim, the terms in which it is couched are insistently vague. The wide-ranging notion of ἔργον resists exclusive affiliation with either crafted objects or skilled endeavor. Rather, it joins, as will the subsequent inventory, material and action under a single category. Equally, if not more indeterminate is the role of the “discoverer” (εὐρόντος) on which the critical weight of the claim rests. The genitive turns the ἔργον into a possession, or perhaps even an offspring,⁵⁷ compounding the challenge of precisely identifying the “product” at stake. More pointedly, the act of “discovery” invoked here can be interpreted with reference to a variety of agents, each with a distinct temporal relationship to the invention he is said to possess or beget.

Within the immediate context of the passage, Pindar's portrait of the Horai provides an illustration of the difficulty in identifying an invention's sole “discoverer.” The Horai are invoked by the poet as the source of Corinth's exceptional σοφίσματα. Yet the goddesses do not act alone. They do not “discover,” but place inventions *in the hearts of men* (ἐν καρδίαις ἀνδρῶν ἔβαλον). The twofold model, combining

⁵⁵ Hubbard 1986: 38–9. On the connection between “winged” architecture and song, see Power 2011.

⁵⁶ Detienne 1971, Dickson 1986. The term *metron* is an accepted poetic designation by the end of the fifth century BCE, meaning either stichic meter or, especially in the plural (poetic) verses. Its use here perhaps picks up on the explicitly poetic description of the dithyramb earlier in the passage.

⁵⁷ Reading the genitive as of source.

divine and mortal endeavor, mirrors that articulated in P. 12, where Athena invents the aulos as a possession *for mortal men* (εὕρεν θεός· ἀλλὰ νιν εὐροῖσ' ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν P. 12.22).⁵⁸ The mortal performers of P. 12, adapting the instrument of divine mimesis to their own form of reenactment, can claim ownership of the tool alongside the goddess. Likewise, the men in whose hearts the Horai place their inventions are equally deserving of the title “discoverer.” Although Pindar’s declaration is made in the singular (ἅπαν δ' εὐρόντος ἔργον), the act of discovery is neither solitary nor single.

The particular examples of invention offered in O. 13 complicate the picture further. Dithyrambic contests are said to be a revelation of graces (or Graces?), yet these embodied choral spectacles only come into being through the performers who reenact them at each occasion. They are, like the aulos which provides their musical accompaniment, inseparable from the iterative rhythms of reperformance that define human song. Temporal questions of a similar nature attach to the unnamed figures of the latter two innovations as well. What does it mean to “set up” (ἐπιτίθημι) a bridle? The action may plausibly refer to the design of the device, but also to the craftsman’s fabrication of the instrument, or to the rider’s placement of the tool upon his horse. Who “sets up” a building? The first inventor of architecture or each subsequent practitioner when he lays out the stones of his structure?⁵⁹ It is surely no coincidence that the catalogue falls under the jurisdiction of the Horai – the Seasons/Hours. The passage of time, more than any other factor, inflects the act of invention.

The multifaceted character of “discovery” (and in particular its extension across time) first adumbrated here will be taken up in earnest in the subsequent account of Bellerophon. The bridle’s status as an ἔργον possessed of more than one “discoverer” will mediate the asymmetrical relationship between Athena and her mortal beneficiary. The extended process of Bellerophon’s

⁵⁸ The use of the verb at the close of the mythical digression forms a ring with the beginning of the narrative: τάν ποτε / Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε θρασεῖαν <Γοργόνων> / οὐλιον θρήνον διαπλέξαισ' Ἀθήνα (P. 12.6–8).

⁵⁹ On Pindar’s double vision of architectural construction, see Ford 2002: 124.

rediscovery of the bridle as a tool for use casts the notion of instrumental invention as a repetitive process, not something that is accomplished once and for all. Nor is it a singular endeavor. Bellerophon's clarity, when it does eventually come, stems from the harmony of his words with those of Polydios, and the ability of both mortal men to reenact the instructions of Athena's divine performance. The import of the seer's intervention is flagged by the recurrence of the language of "discovery": ἐπιχώριον μάντιν ἄσμενος εὔρεν (74). The critical term from the earlier programmatic discussion is found only here in the extended Bellerophon narrative. Rather than discover a tool, Bellerophon discovers the person with whom he can learn to put it to use, with whom he can give it voice once again.

Although the bridle is not, strictly speaking, an instrument of musical endeavor, the Bellerophon narrative of O. 13 aligns the object with tools from the world of song. The identification of dithyrambic choruses as a correlate to the bridle in the programmatic catalogue ensures that the entire instrumental discourse is viewed through the lens of choral performance. Similarly, the critical terms of the reflection suggest poetic endeavor. Pindar regularly applies the verb εὐρίσκω and its cognates to his own task of composition,⁶⁰ and the identification of the bridle as a magic charm or drug aligns it with Pindaric descriptions of his own poetry elsewhere.⁶¹ These resonances, left tacit throughout the narrative proper, are brought to the fore in the poem's concluding lines.

After Bellerophon has set off on his many adventures across the Greek world, joined through the bridle with both Athena and the divine Pegasus, Pindar takes up his own poetic tools. He launches missiles of song (τὰ πολλὰ βέλεα 95), sending them whirling into the air like the roaring rhombos (ἄκόντων ἰέντα ρόμβον 94). The passage is an exuberant fusion of material

⁶⁰ O. 1.110, 3.4, 9.80, P. 1.60, N. 8.20; cf. P. 4.299 and N. 6.54, where the verb is used of other poets, and N. 4.86, of Pindar's potential audience. Athletic achievement and the rewards, including song, that come with it is treated in a similar fashion at O. 7.89, P. 1.48, P. 2.64, N. 7.16, I. 8.5; cf. I. 1.43 of excellence in general.

⁶¹ E.g. *pharmakon* (N. 4.1), *philtion* (P. 3.64) *epaoidai* (P. 3.51), on which see Steiner 1986: 56–7.

instruments from the realms of song and sport. Pindar's choral ἔργον is accomplished through material intermediaries. These tools, like Bellerophon's bridle, serve as vocal conduits across time. They are launched anew each time the song is performed, as Pindar's voice finds its way into the mouths of future singers.

Contemplation of the poetic future is soon made explicit, as Pindar expresses his desire to reveal with clarity "the things to come, when it is time" (τά τ' ἐσσόμενα τότ' ἂν φαίην σαφές 103). This future entails continued song for the poet, and continued victories for his *laudandus*, but these will not remain the exclusive property of a single voice. Once revealed, these accomplishments will become tools available for all to discover, as Pindar instructs his own unnamed addressee in the song's final lines.

καὶ πᾶσαν κάτα
Ἑλλάδ' εὐρήσεις ἐρευνῶν μάσσον' ἢ ὥς ἰδέμεν.
ἄγε κούφοισιν ἔκνευσον ποσίν·
Ζεῦ τέλει, αἰδῶ δίδοι καὶ τύχαν τερπνῶν γλυκεῖαν.
(O. 13.112–15)

*If you look, you will discover (εὐρήσεις) throughout all of Hellas
more than a man could see. Come, toss your head with light
feet. O Zeus Teleios, grant reverence and the sweet fortune of
delights.*

What will Pindar's addressee – a new Bellerophon? – discover, if he looks? Records of victories, no doubt, but also songs to mark those victories, poetic ἔργα to match and reenact the athlete's founding performance.⁶² It is to these songs, already spread throughout the cities of Greece, that Pindar's language of discovery now turns. The repetition of the critical verb εὐρίσκω is a signal that these songs too are things, objects to be found. Discovery here is no more a singular, solitary act than it was for Bellerophon faced with the bridle. Pindar's invitation to his unnamed addressee, suggestively positioned at the close of his song, marks his composition's openness to new performers, to reinvention through the feet of new dancers and the voices

⁶² Currie 2017, on O. 13 in particular, see 200 n. 67.

of new choruses. Like Athena, the poet has crafted a tool for the future, an object for others to discover and make anew.

Speaking Shields

There is no more considered examination of the matrix of vocal surrogacy, material mediation, and the complex temporalities of mimetic performance than Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*. The play is, to quote Froma Zeitlin's seminal structuralist study, a drama of "repetition and condensed reenactment" as the sons of Oedipus play out the parts assigned to them by their father's curse and their grandfather's still unfulfilled oracle.⁶³ This is not merely a question of mythological allusion, but of dramaturgical iteration. As the third (and only surviving) play from Aeschylus' Labdacid tetralogy, *Seven Against Thebes* is haunted by the presence of those previous generations in two plays that preceded it in the theater, *Laius* and *Oedipus* – a haunting all the more spectral for the modern critic, who can glimpse those preceding dramas only through the phantom traces within the extant play.⁶⁴ It is also a drama of reduplication and substitution, as the two brothers fail to distinguish themselves not just from their past, but from each other, unwittingly erasing "the line between singular and plural."⁶⁵ A compulsive impetus to duplication and substitution thus governs both the mythical narrative and its dramatic form, and provides the playwright with a platform for some of his most conceptually challenging reflections on the nature of theatrical performance.

The dramatic action of *Seven Against Thebes* is conducted in large part by means of material intermediaries. The central shield scene – seven paired speeches followed by choral

⁶³ Zeitlin 1982: 18. After nearly four decades, Zeitlin's remains the most powerful scholarly work on the play. Somewhat baffling, therefore, is the recent assertion of Poli-Palladini 2016: 4 that "very little in it has proved influential" and that most scholars view Zeitlin's "semiotics and structuralism as a virtuoso display and optional coating of the traditional questions still worth asking."

⁶⁴ So Zeitlin 1982: 15 calls the play "an orphan twice over, for it has lost both of its predecessors in Aeschylus' Theban trilogy."

⁶⁵ Zeitlin 1982: 37.

rejoinders that runs to over 300 lines – proleptically enacts the martial conflict between Argives and Thebans as a surrogate contest waged through their shields. The weapons of war are repurposed as instruments of performance. Each shield shapes a speech by the messenger, which then is met by a response from Eteocles. Eteocles’ and Polynices’ fraternal strife is filtered through the complex surrogacy of other fighters, as each matched pair promises and foreshadows the mirrored combat of brother against brother.⁶⁶ Reduplications emerge at nearly every turn. As Zeitlin observes, the sequence of speeches “both establishes *doubles* in the antagonistic pairing of warriors and *repeats* that act of doubling seven times.”⁶⁷ Revisiting this structuralist framework through the lens of theatrical reenactment, we can appreciate the ways in which the play’s propensity towards duplication functions as a sustained examination of the ways that (re)performance is facilitated by material objects.⁶⁸

The messenger’s reports are often called ekphrastic, a label that fittingly conveys the pervasive interest in describing the material properties of the attackers’ shields. But this designation, which places emphasis on the shields as crafted artifacts, risks obscuring the objects’ functional status. In what follows, I explore how these martial tools are portrayed as instruments of voice. Throughout the shield scene, voice is transmitted through, and inextricable from, these material objects.⁶⁹ The effect of this material instrumentality is not the effacement of voice but rather a deepening of resonance behind what is heard.

⁶⁶ The most conspicuous, though by no mean the only, indication of this surrogacy is Aeschylus’ choice to name one of the Argive attackers Eteocles, a name not attested in earlier versions of the myth, but a quite obvious link to the name of the Theban king, Eteocles. See the discussions of Garvie 1978: 72–3, Zeitlin 1982: 77–8.

⁶⁷ Zeitlin 1982: 122 (italics original).

⁶⁸ Segal 1986a: 80–1, discussing the unseen presence of written texts in the fifth-century theater, speaks of the way that tragedy produces “a double vision or a double language, of a backstage, of something hidden behind or beneath.”

⁶⁹ On the mediated perception of the Chorus, who gain their understanding of the enemy not through sight, but through the sound of their armor and tools, see Edmunds 2002, Trieschnigg 2016.

Where Pindar's O. 13 traced the fate of Bellerophon's bridle across an extended period of time, incorporating the distinct perspectives of its variously conceived "discoverers" into his narrative, Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* approaches the same problematic temporal extension and diversity of outlook from a single, highly circumscribed position. The exchange between Eteocles and the messenger takes place within the city, away from the objects by which it is shaped. The Argive shields, the objects at the heart of the dramatic action, are never seen on stage.⁷⁰ They exist only in the paired speeches of the actors. The rigid landscape of the drama, claustrophobically contained by the city walls even as the din of the marshaling army rings all around,⁷¹ marks a physical, but also a temporal displacement from the material objects which exist only in the unseen world just beyond the staged action.⁷² The stage is situated within a temporal crease or fold.⁷³ The speeches are removed from and out of step with the reality that they seek to comprehend.⁷⁴ The characters of the drama look outward, beyond the limits of the *here* and *now*, forward to the battle about to take place, and back to the mustering army already witnessed by the messenger.

The messenger, who reports the details of the Argive shield blazons, is the primary vector connecting the two spheres.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Some critics have argued that the Theban attackers, and their shields, would have been present on stage, most recently Poochigian 2007–8, with bibliography. I agree with Taplin 1977: 150–2 (followed now by Poli-Palladini 2016: 113–14) that this assertion is in no way supported by the text, though, as Thalmann 1978: 124 rightly notes, the possibility cannot be conclusively disproved. Chaston 2010: 67 asserts that the Argive shields are "not visible in the acting area" but nevertheless treats them as "props."

⁷¹ Bacon 1964, Thalmann 1978: 38–42. The overly (and unsustainably) rigid geography of "tragic" Thebes is treated in the seminal Zeitlin 1990b. See also Winnington-Ingram 1969, Edmunds 2002, Goldhill 2007.

⁷² On the spatial dynamics of *Seven Against Thebes*, see Thalmann 1978: 38–42, Andrisano 2002, Ley 2007: 20–3. Kampourelli 2016: 23–38 analyzes the varieties of "reported space" on the tragic stage. On the relationship to the historical and mythological topography of Thebes, see Berman 2007: 87–116, Poli-Palladini 2016: 53–8.

⁷³ Schneider 2011: 89.

⁷⁴ Hutchinson 1985: 103 notes that "in this scene, the opposition between the two spheres [on- and off-stage] is fundamental." Lamari 2009 explores the play's use of mythical tradition, especially epic, to construct its "elliptical narratives" (415).

⁷⁵ Bacon 1964: 29 claims that the "messenger, who is the means by which the sights and sounds of the war outside the gates are transmitted is called a κατόπτης ('one

His is a medium of transmission, but also an emblem of the disjunction that produces the play's syncopated rhythms. Having traveled beyond the city's limits to survey the enemy camp, his account, like all messenger speeches, reprises events that have already – albeit, just – taken place beyond the world of the stage.⁷⁶ Unseen events are reimaged and made vivid once more through vocal reenactment. The messenger stands as surrogate for the Argive warriors and their shields, both of which he conjures into presence through an extended series of vocal performances. The messenger is distinguished by having witnessed what others have, and can, not: αὐτὸς κατόπτης δ' εἴμ' ἐγὼ τῶν πραγμάτων (41).⁷⁷ Employing the present tense almost uniformly throughout his reports,⁷⁸ the messenger makes what he has seen *there* and *then* – actions, speeches, objects, bodies – happen anew *here* and *now* by means of his vocal performance.⁷⁹ He will reenact τὰ πράγματα of the Argive camp, creating a theatrical performance both for those within the besieged city of Thebes and for the audience of the drama.⁸⁰

who sees', lines 41 and 369)." See also Roisman 1990. Vidal-Naquet 1988: 284 notes that there are three distinct layers to analyze in the scene: the speeches, the shields, and the spatial coordinates. My analysis here is principally concerned with the first and last of these, but my primary interest is with the role of the messenger, rather than that of Eteocles.

⁷⁶ In her analysis of Euripidean messenger-speeches, de Jong 1991: 9–10 observes that the role of the messenger is to tell "other characters on stage (and the spectators in the theater) what they have not seen themselves." Each messenger is therefore able, according to de Jong, to define "his own function vis-à-vis the spectators in the theater: he temporarily replaces them as spectator and looks *for* them at an off-stage drama." By contrast, Roisman 1990: 19 argues that "unlike the messengers in most Greek tragedies, the messenger of the *Seven against Thebes* is not merely a conveyor of information but a participant in the action." On the properties of dramatic messengers, see also Barrett 2002, Dickin 2009, Perris 2011.

⁷⁷ Bacon 1964: 29, cf. de Jong 1991: 9–10.

⁷⁸ The two notable exceptions to the rule are the aorists at 490–7 and the imperfect at 591, discussed at 142–3 and 152 respectively. One further, though less significant, exception is found at 431 (προσῆκασεν). The present tenses of the descriptions stand in marked contrast to the other tenses (perfects aorists, and futures) that fill the margins of the messenger's report, on which see Taplin 1977: 154, and recently Griffiths 2014, Poli-Palladini 2016: 115–24.

⁷⁹ Edmunds 2002, Dickin 2009: 18.

⁸⁰ Thalmann 1978: 123. Steiner 1994: 50 argues that "the threatening devices [on the shields] act like epic vaunts, messages designed to convey the warriors' hostile intentions and to terrify the already demoralized Thebans."

Unlike the dramatic actors whom he resembles in many respects, the messenger does not perform for a mute audience. Like Bellerophon seeking out Polydios, the messenger finds a partner for his reenactments in Eteocles, the Theban ruler who matches the messenger's vocal performances with his own charged responses. Together the men create a dialogue that grapples with, and seeks to comprehend, both past and future.⁸¹ They conjure these moments in their performative words by means of material tools – the Argive shields – that serve as their primary point of contact with the foes beyond the city walls. The messenger, returned from his excursion to the enemy camp, becomes a surrogate for the objects that he has seen. Eteocles, who will venture to this same off-stage space at the end of the exchange, translates the objects of the messenger's past into prophecies of his future. The series of paired speeches, each a twofold reenactment of an unseen shield, is both echo and anticipation, situated at the junction of what is no-longer and what is not-yet.

Turning to the shield speeches themselves, structures of recursion and reenactment abound. Aeschylus explores the contours of the messenger's surrogacy in detail, elaborating and complicating our picture of his relationship to the objects that he alone has seen across the seven descriptive speeches he delivers. The deliberate, and deliberately inconsistent, evolution of the messenger's performance yields a prismatic view of the shields, tools that – like Bellerophon's bridle or the musical instruments of *Edonians* – take on different properties depending on the vantage from which they are viewed. The first three shields – those of Tydeus, Capaneus, and Eteocles – invite consideration of the vocal surrogacy that underpins the messenger's entire endeavor. The instrumentalization of voice explored in these first speeches is recast in ever more perplexing forms in the second half of the scene. The messenger's final speeches plunge ever farther into the uncanny dimensions of surrogate reenactment. Agents and objects interact in

⁸¹ For a different perspective on the temporal complexities of Eteocles and the messenger's exchange, see Griffiths 2014.

increasingly unusual ways, drawing out the involuted logic by which material tools facilitate the recreation of voice.

At the heart of the messenger's speeches, and Eteocles' responses, lies the unstated question: what is the relationship between the Argive heroes and the weapons that they wield? How does the symbolism of the shield blazons, on which the Thebans' speeches hinge, relate to the men who make use of these tools? In the first shields, voice is at the center of this dynamic. As with the bridle of Pindar's O. 13, embedded speech is used to focus attention on the transfer and reduplication of voice. But unlike Athena's bridle, the shields of the *Seven Against Thebes* are endowed with their own vocal powers. They contribute, as well as transmit, voices that will ultimately emerge on the stage. Yet the shields' vocal properties cannot be entirely distinguished from the voices of their bearers. The inarticulate shouts of the first shield provide an initial hint of the overlap. The savage cries of the bells on Tydeus' shield (ὑπ' ἀσπίδος δὲ τῷ χαλκήλατοι κλάζουσι κώδωνες φόβον 385–6) are unmistakable echoes of the hero's own wild shrieks (Τυδεὺς ... μεσημβριναῖς κλαγγαῖσιν ὡς δράκων βοᾷ 380–1). Attuned to this vocal layering, the messenger returns once again to the matter of Tydeus' shouting as he concludes his account, tying the warrior's voice to his "boastful arms" (ταῖς ὑπερκόμποις σαγαῖς / βοᾷ 391–2).⁸² The voice of the shield matches that of its bearer; the material tool is a direct vocal extension of the man it represents.

The basic vocal correlation of warrior and shield set out in the messenger's description of Tydeus is elaborated in the next two examples, where the shield blazons are inscribed with written messages.⁸³ In both cases, the messenger presents the written words as speech acts. The letters on the shields are not silent writing, but voice. Capaneus, posted to the second gate, bears the image of a man who "speaks in golden letters 'I will set the city aflame'." (χρυσοῖς δὲ φωνεῖ γράμμασιν "πρήσω

⁸² Gurd 2016: 77 notes that sound predominates over visual description in the messenger's first speech.

⁸³ On the shift to written inscriptions, Vidal-Naquet 1988: 286, Zeitlin 1982: 64.

πόλιν.” 434). At the third gate, Eteoclus’ carries a man who shouts “in a string of letters that not even Ares will cast him from the ramparts” (βοῶ δὲ χροῦτος γραμμάτων ἐν ξυλλαβαῖς, ὡς οὐδ’ ἂν Ἄρης σφ’ ἐκβάλαι πυργωμάτων 468–9). The messenger employs variations on *inquit* frames to introduce both speeches, enacting the first in *oratio recta*, the second in slightly modified *oratio obliqua*. The framing language presents the blazons’ speeches as if they had been spoken, as indeed they are (now) revoiced by the messenger on stage. At the same time, the voices that the messenger brings to life are the possession of crafted objects, expressions not of mouths but of the metallic letters so prominently featured in the messenger’s framing language.

The messenger’s mimetic performance translates the whole off-stage scene, aural and visual, into speech. It is not entirely clear whether the embedded speeches of these inscribed shields belong to the category of sight or sound. Scholars tend to assume that the voices come from the anthropomorphic figures on the shield blazons (a nude fighter for Capanaeus, a hoplite for Eteoclus). Most visual reconstructions of the objects represent the words as issuing from metal mouths on analogy with what is found in contemporary vase painting.⁸⁴ But recourse to literal models of iconographic representation risks flattening the vocal layers that emerge from the messenger’s language.⁸⁵ The fighters on Capanaeus’ and Eteoclus’ blazons stand in a relationship of “iconic mimesis” with their bearers;⁸⁶ the metallic men on the shields don’t merely symbolize, but replicate and redouble the “real” men whose success in battle they (seem to) augur. The overlap is not merely a visual one, but sonic as well. The voices of the blazons, speaking through their letters, are shared by the warriors who wield them.⁸⁷ The

⁸⁴ The parallel is drawn by Catenacci 2004: 175. See also Lissarrague 2007: 152–3, who offers a fascinating exploration of the relationship between the shields of the *Seven* and vase depictions of shields. Vidal-Naquet 1988: 285–99 compares the devices to pedimental sculpture.

⁸⁵ There has been a lamentable tendency amongst scholars to try and render the blazons as line drawings, as if their form corresponded to an actual visual object. For a more balanced approach to the relationship between vase iconography and Aeschylus’ text, see Berman 2007: 64–76.

⁸⁶ Zeitlin 1982: 64, and 74 on the distinctions in mimesis between the two.

⁸⁷ Steiner 1994: 51–2.

result is a picture of vocal materiality that has no true correlate in iconographic practice of the time.

In both cases, Aeschylus achieves the ambiguity by omitting an explicitly specified subject in his *inquit* frame. Capaneus, whose own boasting words are mentioned at the beginning of the messenger's report (ὁ κόμπος δ' οὐ κατ' ἀνθρωπον φρονεῖ κτλ. 425–8), never fully relinquishes his hold on the action in his shield.⁸⁸ His agency and presence tightly bookend the messenger's brief description.

ἔχει δὲ σῆμα γυμνὸν ἄνδρα πυρφόρον,
 φλέγει δὲ λαμπὰς διὰ χερῶν ὠπλισμένη,
 χρυσοῖς δὲ φωνεῖ γράμμασιν "πρήσω πόλιν."
 τοιῷδε φωτὶ πέμπε· τίς ξυστήσεται; 435
 τίς ἄνδρα κομπάζοντα μὴ τρέσας μενεῖ;
 (Th. 432–6)

*He has a naked fire-bearing man as a sign, an armed torch
 burns in his hands, and he speaks with golden letters "I will
 set the city aflame." Against this man send – who will match
 him? Who will stand fast and not fear this boasting man?*

It is difficult to chart with precision the boundary between warrior and blazon. Capaneus is undoubtedly the subject of ἔχει at line 432, holding the naked man upon his shield blazon. In the following line, the hands (διὰ χερῶν) in which the blazing torch shines may well be those of the fire-bearing man (ἄνδρα πυρφόρον) depicted on the blazon, but the description is equally suited to Capaneus himself, who carries in his own hands the armor on which the torch is depicted; that is, he carries the torch by means of the shield. This same relationship of mediated action is at work in the following line, where the verb φωνεῖ applies both to the naked warrior and Capaneus, who speaks the warrior's words ("I will burn the city") by means of the letters on the shield. It is to the boasts of the hero, represented by the speeches of both the living man and the speaking figure fashioned on his blazon, that the messenger

⁸⁸ As Steiner 1994: 51 observes, the inscribed message is an echo of "Capaneus' earlier declaration that, whatever the will of Zeus, he would storm the Theban stronghold."

points in his concluding imprecation of his master. And it is this aspect of the report that informs Eteocles' response, treating the boasting voices of Capanaeus and the unarmed figure on his shield as one and the same (κάπογυμνάζων στόμα 441).⁸⁹

The messenger is somewhat more muted in his description of Eteocles' vocal shield than that of Capanaeus. The voice is not reenacted in embedded speech, but the instrumental function of the inscribed letters, already established in the previous report, is once again underscored.

ἄνῆρ ὀπλίτης κλίμακος προσαμβάσεις
 στείχει πρὸς ἐχθρῶν πύργον, ἐκπέρσαι θέλων·
 βοᾷ δὲ χοῦτος γραμμάτων ἐν ξυλλαβαῖς
 ὥς οὐδ' ἂν Ἄρης σφ' ἐκβάλοι πυργωμάτων.
 καὶ τῷδε φωτὶ πέμπει τὸν φερέγγυον 470
 πόλεως ἀπείργειν τῆσδε δούλιον ζυγόν.

(Th. 466–71)

*An armed man climbs a ladder toward the enemy tower,
 wishing to destroy it. He shouts in a string of letters that not
 even Ares would throw him from the ramparts. So, against
 this man send a dependable man to ward off the yoke of
 slavery from this city.*

As Zeitlin observes, the armed warrior on the shield is an even closer match to Eteocles than the nude fighter was to Capanaeus.⁹⁰ Like the man who wields him, the iconographic fighter is encompassed, indeed defined, by material tools; his own armor and ladder as well as the tower of his enemy. Within this grammar of ever-closer correspondences, the shout that *that man* gives (βοᾷ δὲ χοῦτος) can't properly be assigned entirely to either warrior. The voice, coming both from Eteocles and his metallic surrogate, reprises the serpentine cries of his comrade Tydeus, sounds which already found echo in the bronze bells of his weapon. The overlapping of voices in the messenger's reports attests to the equal claim of living speakers and vocal tools on the origins of his reenactment.

⁸⁹ Zeitlin 1982: 67.

⁹⁰ Zeitlin 1982: 74.

The messenger's "restitution" of human voice to the inanimate shields follows the grammar of the weapons themselves, objects shaped by the union of performer and tool.⁹¹ The messenger's mimetic reports only reprise an earlier mimetic surrogacy in which the shields have been made material duplicates of their bearers' mouths. His on-stage surrogacy replays, in inverse, the vocal layering that he witnessed in the *then* and *there*. The metallic letters that "speak" from Capanaeus' and Eteoclus' shields call attention to the instrumental function of the object. The written inscription is a literal reflection of the ways that the material tool is able to speak for its bearer, to mediate and transmit his voice to those who, like the messenger, would perform it anew. The speech of the material tool, the voice which the messenger attributes to the object, is a shared property, born of use and coordination. The materiality of the shields does not prevent us from thinking that the voices performed by the messenger are coming from flesh-and-blood men. The shields function as tools of voice, both speaking in their own right and joining from one speaker to the next. Viewed in this latter sense – as encoded, or indeed written, objects facilitating a transfer of a living voice to a performer – the shields represent a compelling analogue not only to musical instruments, like the aulos, capable of producing voice, but to a different type of theatrical tool, the written scripts that convey the words of dramatic performance.⁹² Like scripts, the shields of the *Seven Against Thebes* anticipate their use for future performance. They are not objects to be admired in their own right, but tools to facilitate voice (and song). Viewed in this way, the inscribed shields epitomize W. B. Worthen's contention that "dramatic writing is writing for use."⁹³

⁹¹ Steiner 1994: 52.

⁹² On the use of written scripts in fifth-century drama, see Segal 1986a, Segal 1992, Wise 1998, Mueller 2015: 155–89; for lyric, see Hubbard 2004, Hubbard 2011.

⁹³ Worthen 2010: xv, who goes on to argue that "in the West, writing has been essential to the imagination and transmission of drama, and to the conception of dramatic performance." I believe that his contention that "dramatic texts reflect the encounter between writing-as-an-object (the book) and performance, between writing and embodiment, and between writing and the space of the stage," despite the distinctly modern perspective, is not out of place here.

It is instructive to note that the inscribed messages of Aeschylus' theatrical objects, conveying voice in metallic letters, are distinguished from the iconographic practice on actual shields of the day by their distinct temporal perspective. Material evidence of combat shields in archaic and classical Greece reflects a far simpler use of written messages than we find in Aeschylus' play. Blazons, when inscribed, tended to convey only basic information; the name of the fighter's home city, often noted by a simple initial, or the identity of the bearer.⁹⁴ As described by the messenger, the shields of the *Seven Against Thebes*, by contrast, position the anthropomorphic figures within a kind of static drama. The written words articulate the action the men are about to perform.⁹⁵ The temporality of these inscribed speeches, looking forward to an event that is always about to take place, also sets the unseen images apart from contemporary vase paintings, to which they are often compared. While both objects use writing to articulate complex scenes, the imagined shields of Aeschylus' drama introduce a distinctly proleptic perspective – a disposition marked by the future tense or optative mood of the inscribed speeches – that is not shared by their non-theatrical counterparts. The temporal disposition of the shields is a critical facet of their instrumental materiality. It marks them as objects to be put to use, to facilitate performance.

The instrumental temporality of the shields serves to further imbricate the unseen objects within the fold or crease of the dramatic action, inviting consideration of this expressly material order of theatrical recurrence. The shields themselves, like theatrical scripts, look forward to a performance that will give new voice to the words for which they are the conduit and fulfill the promise of the drama they contain. But Aeschylus

⁹⁴ Catenacci 2004: 170–5, Berman 2007. Alternatively, writing on shields is found expressing *kalos pais* phrases which appear as unconnected to the imagery of the shield device (similar to the *kalos* inscriptions found in vase painting from the period). Roisman 1990: 24–6 argues (unconvincingly, to my mind) that the messenger has fabricated the speeches of the shields to reflect “his own interpretation of their meaning.”

⁹⁵ Catenacci 2004: 175.

inverts this proleptic perspective through the retrospective gaze of the messenger, who performs for Eteocles (and the theater audience) things that he has already seen and heard, events that have already taken place.

Eteocles, more than a mute observer of the messenger's performance, engages in this temporal play as well, seeking to rewrite the future envisioned by the shields. His intervention does not simply confirm, through reiteration, the power of words already spoken, as was the case with Polydorus in *O.* 13, but transforms them through the power of his own voice.⁹⁶ This battle "in and of representation" is not merely a question of words,⁹⁷ but of the instrumental function of the material tools which bear the proleptic texts. Eteocles' sophisticated understanding of the fusion of object, voice, and performance (in other words, of the theatrical nature of his undertaking) is epitomized by his response to Eteocles and the hoplite warrior on his shield. Eteocles encodes his shield with an insistently open-ended future. From the proleptic perspective of the emblazoned warrior's boast, his assault on the city ramparts will never be curtailed. The shield is, in a sense, a static feedback loop of the scene that it "scripts," a performance always ready to be made new again. Eteocles' response is to reimagine the shield, and the man who bears it, as a very different sort of material object with an anti-theatrical temporal character.

Eteocles pairs Eteocles with a Theban warrior who, the king claims, will vanquish his Argive foe and triumphantly hang his victim together with his shield from his roof as spoils of war. By foretelling a single, shared fate for the "two men" (i.e. both Eteocles and the hoplite on his blazon), Eteocles affirms the vocal conflation of the messenger's reenactment.⁹⁸ But the spirit of his response runs counter to the logic of theatrical reenactment that informed the messenger's account.

⁹⁶ Cameron 1970: 101, Thalmann 1978: 107, Zeitlin 1982: 44–9.

⁹⁷ The quote is from Goldhill 2007: 132.

⁹⁸ Zeitlin 1982: 76–7.

Vocal Tools

ἦ καὶ δὴ ἄνδρε καὶ πόλισμ' ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
ἐλὼν λαφύροις δῶμα κοσμήσει πατρός.

(*Th.* 478–9)

*So taking two men and the city on his shield, he will decorate
the house of his father with spoils.*

Eteocles seeks to disarm the theatrical temporality of the shield, appropriating its anticipation of future performance to his own ends by transforming its proleptic promise into retrospective memorial. The shield is no longer an instrument of war – a tool to be used – but a decorative monument to what has been done. Hung as a marker of Theban victory, Benardete remarks, “what the shield shows is literally true: Ares cannot cast this image from the ramparts.”⁹⁹ The voice of the object is transformed by the temporal reconfiguration and the language of its erstwhile boast will become a source of shame. Recast in this way, the letters on the blazon resemble another type of inscribed weapon of archaic and classical Greece, those written upon by victors after success in battle. This retrospective temporality, symbolized by the victor’s post-factum act of inscription, transforms the object into a votive gift of thanksgiving, a thing now as powerless to do harm as the vanquished man who once wielded it. Without the possibility of being put “to use,” the shield loses its status as script. Although it retains its voice, the shield is no longer a tool for future performance.

If the first three shields present the vocal conflation of warriors and shields as an expression of a readily intelligible theatrical temporality – marked by repetitions and redoublings, by inverted chronologies and surrogate identities – the second phase of the messenger’s report invites us to consider mimetic relationships from a somewhat different vantage point.¹⁰⁰ Surrogacy in these latter shields becomes more complex. The relationships between the warriors and their blazons are skewed and inverted as the direct equivalences of the earlier images are replaced by devices that challenge the

⁹⁹ Benardete 1968: 8.

¹⁰⁰ Cameron 1970: 103–4, Thalmann 1978: 106, 114; Zeitlin 1982: 83 identifies Hippomedon’s shield as “the pivotal point of the sevenfold sequence.”

way that material tools permit identity and voice to function in time. Presenting material surrogacy in increasingly intricate forms, the messenger's reports in this later section of the shield scene challenge Eteocles, and the audience, to recognize an ever expanding *then* and *there* within the *here* and *now* of performance.

The first of these later shields belongs to Hippomedon. His blazon depicts the chthonic monster Typhon, an image that overtly resists the close mimetic resemblances of the previous two shields.¹⁰¹ As he searches for a new model to account for the relationship between bearer and tool, the messenger's halting and at times confused description reflects the challenge posed by this new order. The new shield introduces an additional layer of complexity with its focus on the identity of the shield's maker as distinct from the man who bears the weapon. The report begins with a mention of a vocal expression. Hippomedon stands "with a shout;" a voice, not clearly assigned to either warrior or blazon, that recalls the more developed explorations of vocal layering in the previous shields.¹⁰² The confusion between man and shield, agent and object, is, for the first time, acknowledged by the messenger, who goes out of his way to disentangle the two before elaborating at length on his own emotional response.

ξὺν βοῇ παρίσταται,
ἵππομέδοντος σχῆμα καὶ μέγας τύπος.
ἄλω δὲ πολλήν, ἀσπίδος κύκλον λέγω,
ἔφριξα δινήσαντος, οὐκ ἄλλως ἔρω. 490
ὁ σηματουργὸς δ' οὗ τις εὐτελὴς ἄρ' ἦν
ὅστις τόδ' ἔργον ὥπασεν πρὸς ἀσπίδι

(Th. 487–92)

*He takes a stand with a shout, the form and great stamp
of Hippomedon. A great disk – I mean the circle of his
shield, and I shuddered at its whirling, I cannot deny it. The*

¹⁰¹ Zeitlin 1982: 83–4.

¹⁰² ξὺν βοῇ παρίσταται 487 quite clearly recalls the shouts of Tydeus (ὡς δράκων βοᾷ 381, ταῖς ὑπερκόμποις σαγαῖς / βοᾷ 391–2) and Eteocles (βοᾷ δὲ χούτος 468), so Thalmann 1978: 112.

signmaker was no cheapjack, whoever added this work to the shield.

As with the indeterminate shout, it is unclear whether the σχῆμα καὶ μέγας τύπος belong to Hippomedon's flesh-and-blood body or the shield which is its material extension and double (a stamp).¹⁰³ Aware that his description has impossibly blended the two, the messenger offers his clarification: *I mean the circle of his shield* (ἀσπίδος κύκλον λέγω). But it remains unclear just how far this specification applies. Are we to understand everything that the messenger has said with reference only to the blazon? The challenge of maintaining such a definitive perspective is immediately underscored by the stress placed on the motion of the shield, the spinning (δινήσαντος) which must, at least in part, be understood as a result of Hippomedon's active manipulation.¹⁰⁴

The irresolvable confusion leads the messenger to consider yet another figure, the workman (σηματουργός) responsible for the fearsome blazon. The virtuosity of the craftsman is beyond question (οὐ τις εὐτελὴς ἄρ' ἦν), yet his identity remains unknown (ὅστις τόδ' ἔργον ὥπασεν). Where Pindar allowed us to see Athena's divine hands at work on the aulos in P. 12 and to hear her pronouncement over the bridle in O. 13 before considering the objects' future use in the hands of (other) performers, Aeschylus only now hints at the agent that lies behind the warriors' shields. Similarly, until this point, we have had no indication of the messenger's responses to the things he saw and heard on his expedition to the Argive camp. Now, in his fourth speech, we get our first glimpse of the messenger's own experience in the *there* and *then*. The first-person aorist, ἔφριξα – corresponding to the past descriptions of the craftsman, ἦν, ὥπασεν – is unique amongst his reports. As the messenger recalls his own past emotion, the deeds of the Argive fighter are also displaced from the *here* and *now* (note

¹⁰³ Zeitlin 1982: 87, Steiner 1994: 54. In a different context, Hall 2006: 102 draws a connection between *tupoi* and the process of constructing theatrical masks.

¹⁰⁴ So, Herodotus describes Sophanes: ἐπ' ἀσπίδος αἰεὶ περιθεούσης καὶ οὐδαμὰ ἀτρεμιζούσης ἐφόρει ἐπίσημον ἀγκυραν (9.74.10–11).

the aorist ἐπηλάλαξεν 497 following the messenger's first-person reflections). Through the uncovering of the craftsmen, a new temporal perspective emerges as we learn that the Argives too are dependent on others who are no longer present to furnish them with the tools of performance. They too are taking up instruments made by hands not their own.

The messenger's brief digression adds a significant new facet to the play's model of instrumental mimesis. Through the introduction of the unknown artisan, the theatrical temporality facilitated by the shields expands beyond the performers with whom the messenger himself has been in contact. The material intermediary connects his performance, as well as that of Hippomedon and of Eteocles, to yet another *then* and *there*. In different ways, each reenactment transforms the craftsman's work (τόδ' ἔργον), conveyed through the shield, into vocal expression. When the messenger finally turns his attention to the image represented on Hippomedon's shield, his description will be shaped by this newly extended frame.

Typhon, the terrible monster placed by the σηματοουργός on Hippomedon's blazon, is not a ready surrogate for the Argive fighter. Its shining brilliance on the shield is a material manifestation of the imbalanced relationship between human voices and material tools. As the messenger contemplates the power of the image, woven round with a border of serpents, he once again hears a voice shared equally between the warrior and his instrument.

Τυφῶν' ἰέντα πύρπινοον διὰ στόμα
 λιγύν μέλαιναν, αἰόλην πυρὸς κάσιν·
 ὄφρων δὲ πλεκτάναισι περίδρομον κύτος
 495
 προσηδάφισται κοιλογάστορος κύκλου.
 αὐτὸς δ' ἐπηλάλαξεν, ἔνθεος δ' Ἄρει
 βακχᾶ πρὸς ἀλκὴν, θυιάς ὥς, φόβον βλέπων.
 (Th. 493–8)

[on his shield is] Typhon, hurling black smoke, the nimble brother of fire, from his fire-breathing mouth, and the center of the hollow-bellied shield is held fast by a ring of woven snakes. He shouted out, and inspired by Ares dances wildly towards battle like a bacchant, looking fearsomely.

Instead of words, the mouth of the great monster produces black smoke. The detail offers a marked contrast not only to the speaking figures on the preceding blazons, but to the Hesiodic Typhoeus capable of shifting between every type of voice.¹⁰⁵ Aeschylus' Typhon may not be the literal vocal mimic familiar from epic, a serpentine monster who speaks with a hundred tongues. But the single mouth of the beast on Hippomedon's blazon is no less a symbol of mimetic polyphony. The snakes which adorn a shield are artisanal reproductions of the hundred serpent heads of the Hesiodic Typhoeus: ἦν ἑκατὸν κεφαλαὶ ὄφις, δεινοῖο δράκοντος, / γλώσσησι δνοφερῇσι λελιχμότες (*Theog.* 825–6). Like the screaming serpents atop the gorgons' heads in Pindar's P. 12, Hesiod's snakeheads are vocal surrogates, their darkened tongues reenacting the voices of others. Aeschylus adapts Hesiod's darkened tongues to his crafted instrument, and in doing so invites us to hear the cry of the black smoke (λιγνὺν μέλαιναν) that the artisan has fashioned.¹⁰⁶ The tool may not be inscribed with words, but it is still a conduit of voice.

In an elegant ring structure, the messenger's delayed description of Hippomedon's shield returns to the ambiguous vocal outlook from which he began. The unclaimed shout (ξὺν βοῇ) finds echo in a war-cry that comes from an unspecified "he" (αὐτὸς ἐπηλάλαξεν). Modern interpreters tend to assume that "he" is Hippomedon, but the Argive fighter has been all but absent from the report from its outset and there is nothing to suggest that he and he alone occupies the messenger's imagination here. Certainly, the tool cannot dance, inspired by Ares, without the agency of a correspondingly inspired Hippomedon. But for the messenger, the voice (and body and power) of the warrior plays out through his tool. The movements and shout cannot be disentangled from the tool

¹⁰⁵ Hesiod *Theog.* 829–35, on which see Kaimio 1977: 19–24, Blaise 1992: 361–3, Ford 1992: 190–1, Leclerc 1993: 43–5, Too 1998: 20–9, Collins 1999: 244–6, Goslin 2010. For discussion of the passage's importance for Pindar P. 1, see Morgan 2015: 313–16.

¹⁰⁶ The use of the noun λιγνύς in this context is perhaps intended to recall the near homophone λιγύς (clear-voiced), which is commonly applied to speech and, more often, musical expression.

which pours smoke from the mouth of a fearsome monster. A suspicion that Hippomedon's shield continues to influence the conclusion of the messenger's report is supported by his final invocation of the terrible look (φόβον βλέπων), a phrase that calls to mind the frightening sight that so moved him at the outset. Now, at the close of his speech, the messenger knows better than to try and disentangle the excess of possible referents. The exceptional work – this work (τόδ' ἔργον) which is both object and performance, both creation and implementation, both foundation and reenactment – belongs equally, though in different form, to its various “discoverers.” Like Bellerophon's bridle, the voice can still be heard in the tool even though the object does not speak. Adding his own voice to the irregular harmony, the messenger becomes a surrogate for a voice that is heard only in the shining smoke that pours from the mouth on Hippomedon's shield.

Eteocles responds to the disjunctive mimesis of shield and bearer, adapting his reply to the new model of mimetic instrumentality. In a lone exception from his established practice, Eteocles uses the shield blazon of his Theban defender as the criterion for selection, pairing Hippomedon with a man who bears the figure of Zeus, the vanquisher of Typhon, on his own blazon.¹⁰⁷

ὁ μὲν γὰρ πύρπιον Τυφῶν' ἔχει,
 Ὑπερβίῳ δὲ Ζεὺς πατήρ ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
 σταδαῖος ἦσται, διὰ χερὸς βέλος φλέγων·
 κοῦπω τις εἶδε Ζῆν' αὖτις νικώμενον.
 τοιάδε μέντοι προσφίλεια δαιμόνων. 515
 πρὸς τῶν κρατούντων δ' ἔσμεν, οἳ δ' ἡσσωμένων.
 εἰκὸς δὲ πράξειν ἄνδρας ὧδ' ἀντιστάτας,
 εἰ Ζεὺς γε Τυφῶ καρτερώτερος μάχῃ·
 Ὑπερβίῳ τε πρὸς λόγον τοῦ σήματος
 σωτήρ γένοιτ' ἂν Ζεὺς ἐπ' ἀσπίδος τυχῶν.
 (Th. 511–20)

*For he has fire-breathing Typhon, but father Zeus stands upon
 the shield of Hyperbios, his missiles burning in his hand. And*

¹⁰⁷ Zeitlin 1982: 83 “the enemy's shield, for the first and only time in the series, meets its iconic counterpart in the shield of the defender.”

Vocal Tools

no one has ever known Zeus to be vanquished – such, indeed, is the goodwill of the gods. We are with those in power, they with those who were bested. It seems that he will do the same with mortal adversaries, if indeed Zeus was more powerful than Typhon in battle. May Zeus who is upon the shield be a savior to Hyperbios, according to the argument (λόγον) of his sign.

Eteocles steps into the realm of semblances that the messenger has established. He too recognizes that the material artifacts of craftsmen can give shape to performances when their tools are put to use (εἰκὸς δὲ πράξειν). Even without a voice inscribed in its metal form, the shield can give rise to a reenactment through its mute speech (πρὸς λόγον τοῦ σήματος).¹⁰⁸ As tools of reenactment, the shields are not simply reflections of the reality around them. They shape the actions of those who wield them. Together performer and instrument create a shared voice, something possessed by neither alone but endowed nonetheless with vital power.

The disassociation of blazon and bearer, and the corresponding expansion of performers able to inhabit roles by means of the shields, broadens the temporal reach of the objects and permits a more creative manipulation of the instruments' mimetic powers. Hippomedon's blazon achieves this end as if by accident, through the virtuosity of its unknown craftsman. The shield of the next Argive, Parthenopaeus, does so intentionally, harnessing the full mimetic force of his tool and turning it against his foe. By contrast with Hippomedon, whose own body is effaced in the messenger's report by his terrible shield, Parthenopaeus is given a fully rounded physical description before any mention is made of his weapon. The emphasis on his physical form, as separate and distinct from the blazon that he wields,¹⁰⁹ parallels the very disjunction that the warrior himself exploits. Rather than a doublet of himself, Parthenopaeus adorns his shield with the image of his

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Zeitlin 1982: 86 "in bringing together the *logos* and the *sēma* of the shield, [Eteocles] brings together the iconographic and verbal systems."

¹⁰⁹ The messenger devotes extra time to Parthenopaeus' appearance, emphasizing the falseness of his form. His lovely face and downy cheeks belie his savage nature. His very name, invoking virginal purity, is contradicted by his savage mind (Zeitlin 1982: 99–100). His deceptive appearance mirrors that of his blazon, his own

enemy: a Theban in the grip of the Sphinx. He knows that his shield will be put to performative use in combat, where others will help to activate its message. By preemptively placing the image of his enemy on the shield, Parthenopaeus inverts the mimetic correspondence so that his Theban attacker will, in fact, be fighting his own surrogate rather than his Argive foe (ὥς πλεῖστ' ἐπ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἰάπτεσθαι βέλη. 544).¹¹⁰ The scenario prefigures the fraternal pairing with which the shield scene will culminate,¹¹¹ but unlike that later inevitable and unintended reduplication born of the mirrored nature of Oedipus' sons, here Parthenopaeus deliberately takes advantage of the distinct identities of those who will perform through his shield. His own distance from the mimetic object he wields allows him to dictate the performance of others.

Even as he looks to the future, Parthenopaeus draws on the past in crafting his blazon. The scene represented on his shield is a moment from the history of Thebes, when the Sphinx, not the Argives, was the enemy threatening the city. The image is itself a reiteration of events from yet another *there* and *then* – a static, plastic reenactment of the conflict to which the martial strife now at hand can ultimately be traced. The messenger, in his amazement at Hippomedon's shield, was able to perceive the history of a craftsman's artisanal performance within a warrior's tool. An analogous archaeology of performance is at work here, as Parthenopaeus uncovers agents of the past whose actions give form to those he is about to undertake. The iterative force can be felt within the drama of the *Seven Against Thebes* on its own, but was likely heightened through its resonance with the other plays in Aeschylus' Labdacid tetralogy.¹¹² Very little can be said with certainty regarding the plots of *Laius* and *Oedipus*, the first two plays in the tetralogy, other than

beautiful body is yet another false surrogate, a suggestion made evident in the final physical detail mentioned by the messenger: his terrible eye (γοργὸν δ' ὄμμα' ἔχων 536) which resembles the gorgon blazons that commonly adorn Greek shields, so Hutchinson 1985 *ad loc.*

¹¹⁰ Thalmann 1978: 115.

¹¹¹ Thalmann 1978: 41, Zeitlin 1982: 101.

¹¹² Zeitlin 1982: 102–3.

that they relate important moments in the lives of the titular characters, the grandfather and father, respectively, of Eteocles and Polynices.¹¹³ The hostile presence of the Sphinx at Thebes was, however, implicated in nearly every critical event relating to these two figures – whether as the punishment for Laius’ impiety or as the conquest that paved the way for Oedipus’ coronation¹¹⁴ – and it would be surprising if the beast did not figure in some important way in one or both of these plays.¹¹⁵ With regards to the satyric *Sphinx*, the title offers firmer ground for assuming an important role for the hybrid creature, likely as a mimetic character within the drama.¹¹⁶ Parthenopaeus’ Sphinx thus offers an allusion to Thebes’ past that goes beyond a general mythical narrative. It is a pointed reference to the four-part drama, itself a series of repetitions and reenactments across the generations of Labdacids, of which the messenger’s ekphrastic reenactments are part. The image of the Sphinx on the unseen object becomes a site of pointed reflection on the totality of Aeschylus’ dramatic endeavor. With its relationship to performances both past and future, Parthenopaeus’ shield exemplifies the role of the material tool within the theater. The instrument is able to negotiate temporal juxtapositions by fusing retrospective and anticipatory perspectives into a single object.

In the wake of Parthenopaeus’ forceful embrace of the theatrical character of his blazon, the sixth Argive fighter, the seer Amphiaraus, adopts a distinctly anti-mimetic stance.¹¹⁷ Alone amongst his comrades, Amphiaraus rejects the symbolism of a shield blazon and with it the model of surrogate reenactment for which it stands. Wishing, as the messenger reports, to *be* rather than *seem* noble, Amphiaraus bears a shield without embellishment: σῆμα δ’ οὐκ ἐπῆν κύκλω· οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄριστος,

¹¹³ On the tetralogy, see Sommerstein 1996: 84–90, Poli-Palladini 2016: 145–74.

¹¹⁴ Andrisano 2002.

¹¹⁵ More likely as an unseen figure than an embodied character.

¹¹⁶ On *Sphinx*, see Krumeich et al. 1999: 189–96. Coo 2019 offers a sophisticated analysis of the unconventional temporal structures that attend to the inclusion of satyr drama within a connected tetralogy.

¹¹⁷ Zeitlin 1982: 114–15, Steiner 1994: 56–7.

ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλει (591–2). His tool is meant to function only as protection and not as the conduit of voice or actions.¹¹⁸ As many scholars have noted, Amphiaraus is the only Argive fighter portrayed in a positive light.¹¹⁹ The messenger describes him as a “man of soundest mind and seer of greatest courage” (ἄνδρα σωφρονέστατον, ἀλκὴν ἄριστον μάντιν 568–9), a judgment echoed by Eteocles in his response (σώφρων δίκαιος ἀγαθὸς εὐσεβὴς ἄνθρωπος 610). Yet, just as Amphiaraus is unable to escape his role in a battle that he does not support,¹²⁰ the seer cannot avoid participation in the mimetic semblances of the drama. Although his shield resists the complex relationships of instrumental surrogacy embraced by his fellow fighters who find voice through the material proxy of their shields, Amphiaraus is nevertheless subsumed into the theatrical matrix of what *seems* to be when the messenger replicates his voice in embedded speech.¹²¹ What the messenger offers to Eteocles in his sixth report is not the reenactment of a shield blazon, but a lifelike rendering of the voice of a man.

The messenger's account of Amphiaraus contains more reported speech than any of his other reports, and the only speech unambiguously attributed to a living, rather than artisanal, voice.¹²² Prior to his brief concluding description of Amphiaraus' unadorned shield (590–2), the vast majority of the messenger's “ekphrasis” consists of reenacting the seer's abusive speeches to his fellow fighters. The first reported speech, Amphiaraus' rebuke of Tydeus, is introduced nearly as soon as the messenger begins his description. The catalogue of

¹¹⁸ Though as Bacon 1964: 33, Zeitlin 1982: 115, and Steiner 1994: 56–7 argue, the circle of the blank shield calls to mind the “eye” of prophetic insight, Amphiaraus' unique gift amongst the Argive fighters.

¹¹⁹ Thalmann 1978: 117–18, Roisman 1990: 30; Steiner 1994: 56 argues that “absence of an outer mark also offers an image of the seer's inner purity.”

¹²⁰ The oddness of Amphiaraus' participation in the attack is underscored by Eteocles, who expresses the (justified, but incorrect) expectation that the seer will ultimately refuse to fight: δοκῶ μὲν οὖν σφε μὴδὲ προσβαλεῖν πύλαις (615).

¹²¹ So Blau 1982: 148 reflects that, although the consciousness of performance may appear to be absent from certain kinds of performance, nevertheless, “as in a topological warp, [it] is there in its appearance, appearing not to be.”

¹²² Hutchinson 1985: 104 is perhaps too categorical when he claims that 580–9 “are the only words we hear an Argive speak.”

the seer's merits blends seamlessly into the catalogue of insults (κακοῖσι) that he hurls at his comrade.

ἕκτον λέγοιμ' ἄν ἄνδρα σωφρονέστατον,
 ἄλκην ἄριστον μάντιν, Ἀμφιάρεω βίαν·
 Ὅμολωσιν δὲ πρὸς πύλαις τεταγμένος
 κακοῖσι βάζει πολλὰ Τυδέως βίαν, 570
 τὸν ἀνδροφόντην, τὸν πόλεως τaráκτορα,
 μέγιστον Ἄργει τῶν κακῶν διδάσκαλον,
 Ἐρινύος κλητῆρα, πρόσπολον φόνου,
 κακῶν δ' Ἀδράστῳ τῶνδε βουλευτήριον.

(Th. 568–75)

I may say that the sixth is a man of most sound mind, a seer of the greatest courage, Amphiaras. Stationed by the Homoloid gate, he castigates Tydeus: murderer, disturber of the city, the greatest teacher of evils in Argos, summoner of a Fury, minister of slaughter, and counsellor of Adrastus in these evils.

It is not clear whether the litany of abuse is rendered in embedded speech. The accusatives, paralleling the framing language (Τυδέως βίαν), seem to argue against such an interpretation. But the strong emotional charge of the reproaches and the sheer volume of vituperation (the four full trimeter lines vastly outweigh the one and a half already devoted to Amphiaras' virtues)¹²³ lend the messenger's performance of the insults an undeniable vibrancy and immediateness. No sooner has the messenger wrapped up his rendition of Amphiaras' denigration of Tydeus than he turns, without pause, to the seer's invective against Polynices.

καὶ τὸν σὸν † αὖτις πρὸς μόραν † ἀδελφόν,
 ἐξυπτιάζων ὄνομα, Πολυνείκους βίαν
 † δὶς τ' ἐν τελευτῇ † τοῦνομ' ἐνδατούμενος
 καλεῖ, λέγει δὲ τοῦτ' ἔπος διὰ στόμα·
 “ἢ τοῖον ἔργον καὶ θεοῖσι προσφιλές, 580
 καλὸν τ' ἀκοῦσαι καὶ λέγειν μεθυστέροις,
 πόλιν πατρώαν καὶ θεοὺς τοὺς ἐγγενεῖς

¹²³ On the thinness of Aeschylus' depiction of Amphiaras, see Foster 2017: 154–5 who suggests that “the shield, devoid of a blazon, [is] a metonym for the blankness of the character of Amphiaras himself.”

Speaking Shields

πορθεῖν, στράτευμ' ἐπακτὸν ἐμβεβληκότα;
 μητρός τε πηγὴν τίς κατασβέσει δίκη,
 πατρὶς τε γαῖα σῆς ὑπὸ σπουδῆς δορί
 585 ἄλοῦσα πῶς σοι ξύμμαχος γενήσεται;
 ἔγωγε μὲν δὴ τήνδε πτανῶ χθόνα
 μάντις κεκευθὼς πολέμιας ὑπὸ χθονός·
 μαχώμεθ'· οὐκ ἄτιμον ἐλπίζω μόρον.”
 (Th. 576–89)

And then † in turn to [your] brother's part † turning his name back on him – Polynices – and speaking his name † in double fashion †, he calls, and speaks this speech from his mouth “Is such a deed pleasing to the gods, is it a noble one for future men to hear and to speak, to ravage your father city and kindred gods, setting a foreign army against it? What justice will dry up a mother's spring? How will your paternal land be your ally when it has been conquered by the spear at your behest? For my part, I will make fat this land, a prophet hidden under enemy earth. Let us fight, for I expect a death that is not without honor.”

For the second speech, the messenger adopts the clear markers of embedded speech, introducing the voice he is about to present with an elaborate *inquit* frame before plunging himself into the character of Amphiaraus for a full ten trimeter lines. Between the two speeches and their framing language, fully two-thirds of the description of Amphiaraus (nineteen out of twenty-nine lines) is devoted to a reenactment of the absent seer's speech.

It is only as a belated coda to this ample recitation that the messenger recalls the bare bronze of the seer's shield. A material counterpoint to the seer's lengthy speech, the messenger weaves his mention of the shield into the language of his concluding *inquit* frame. The unmarked tool is quite literally enveloped by the messenger's concern for Amphiaraus' voice.

τοιαῦθ' ὁ μάντις ἀσπίδ' εὐκῆλως ἔχων
 590 πάγχχαλκον ἠῦδα. σῆμα δ' οὐκ ἔπην κύκλω·
 οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄριστος ἄλλ' εἶναι θέλει,
 βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
 ἐξ ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα.
 (Th. 590–4)

These things the seer, holding his all-bronze shield without fear, said. There was no sign on his blazon, for he does not

Vocal Tools

*wish to seem, but to be the best, reaping a deep furrow
through his mind from which trusted decisions grow.*

Amphiaraus seeks to distinguish himself from his hawkish comrades. Yet he cannot anticipate, as they all have, the ways in which his very voice commits him to the world of semblances, to theatrical representations and reimaginings, whether he wishes it to or not.¹²⁴ Whereas Parthenopaeus was able to turn the performative nature of his mimetic tool to his advantage, Amphiaraus does not recognize that his speech is endowed with the same instrumental potential.¹²⁵ Even without the aid of a material conduit, the messenger is able to transmit the seer's voice onto the stage, to make him *seem* to speak – to perform – through the mouth of a surrogate. Although Amphiaraus' speech comes through his mouth (διὰ στόμα 579) as opposed to the metallic letters (χρυσοῖς δὲ φωνεῖ γράμμασιν 434, γραμμάτων ἐν ξυλλαβαῖς 468) that permit Capaneus and Eteoclus to speak through their shields, the result is the same in all cases: the embodied medium of the messenger lets their voices be heard anew, by new ears, a new audience. Amphiaraus may not have a mimetic doublet on his shield, but he has one on the stage.

To perform Amphiaraus' speeches, the messenger makes use of the same techniques of vocal surrogacy and reenactment that he brought to bear on his earlier material descriptions. The syncopated temporality of his (re)performance is highlighted by the discordant tenses of his framing language, which contrasts the vivid present tense of the two opening *inquires* (βάζει 571; καλεῖ, λέγει 579) with the distancing imperfect of the concluding frame (ἤυδα 591). The voice that has been heard in the *here* and *now* is, at its close, placed back in the *there* and *then* from which it came. As with the shield descriptions that

¹²⁴ By contrast, Zeitlin 1982: 116 argues that “Amphiaraus masters the problem of difference, as it were, by demonstrating that difference resides within himself.” Somewhat differently, but in the same vein, Steiner 1994: 57 asserts that “by choosing a shield without a blazon, Amphiaraus has distanced himself from the sphere of conventional representations and has reclaimed objects back from their codes.”

¹²⁵ But the description of the seer's mental “furrow” (ἄλοκα διὰ φρενός) suggests a certain instrumental materiality to his very body akin to that he disdains in his comrades' shields.

precede it, the vocal ekphrasis of Amphiaraus looks forward to the battle ahead, including the seer's own death (587–9), the outcome now more reliably predicted through the prophet's divine insight.¹²⁶ At the same time, a different temporal matrix comes into view as the messenger revisits the structure of his own scouting report. Tydeus and Polynices, the two fighters addressed by Amphiaraus in the speeches recounted by the messenger, represent, respectively, the first and last champions named in the messenger's account.¹²⁷

With regards to Tydeus, whose placement at the Proetid gate the messenger has already conveyed,¹²⁸ the sharp rebukes of Amphiaraus complete a verbal encounter that the messenger began in that earlier report. In that account, the messenger reported on Tydeus' own harsh words for Amphiaraus, albeit in a brief and rather vague *oratio obliqua*.

θείνει δ' ὀνειδίζει μάντιν Οἰκλείδην σοφόν,
σαίνειν μόρον τε καὶ μάχην ἄψυχῃα.
τοιαῦτ' αὐτῶν τρεῖς κατασκίους λόφους
σεΐει, κράνους χαίτωμ', ...

(Th. 382–5)

*And he strikes the wise seer, the son of Oecles, with
reproach, (saying he) fawns before fate and is cowardly
in battle. Shouting such things, he shakes three
overshadowing crests, the plume of his helmet, ...*

Within the context of the report on Tydeus, the detail fits into the larger pattern of the brash and bestial shouts that arise from the champion and his shield. The metaphoric use of the verb θείνω (meaning literally, to strike) lends a material quality to Tydeus' verbal insults that fits well with the blending of voice and object developed there and in the reports immediately following. Tydeus' verbal abuse is presented as a solitary outburst in the earlier account, a variation on the isolation of

¹²⁶ Zeitlin 1982: 117–23. On Amphiaraus' fate, see Pfeijffer 1999: 535–6.

¹²⁷ Zeitlin 1982: 119 “in this way, the syntagmatic power of the sequence [of speeches] is mobilized, reminding us that each pairing is a link in a longer chain.”

¹²⁸ On the connection between the name of the gate Προιτιδες (πύλαι) and its position at the head of the messenger's catalogue, see Roisman 1990: 26. See also Zeitlin 1982: 117 on Amphiaraus' position at the Homoloid gate, the “gate of sameness.”

embedded speakers that is so pervasive in the work of Pindar and Aeschylus. From the vantage of the messenger's later report on Amphiaraus, however, we belatedly hear the other side of (what we now understand to have been) a two-part exchange.¹²⁹ The relationship between the mirrored rebukes is never clearly defined. The messenger draws no direct link between the two voices. Nevertheless, the suggestion of vocal correspondence calls attention to the crafted temporality of the messenger's theatrical reproductions. These voices that once met each other are now segmented, segregated, given new form by the same surrogate in artificially severed performances.

The second speech of Amphiaraus that the messenger reperforms, the much longer and more detailed attack on Polynices, anticipates the naming of Eteocles' brother (who has not been mentioned by either the messenger or Eteocles up to this point) as the attacker of the seventh and final gate, and thus the inevitable pairing of the sons of Oedipus.¹³⁰ More pointedly, insofar as Amphiaraus' polemic takes issue with Polynices' faith in Justice, the Argive seer prefigures the response that Eteocles himself will soon offer to his brother's material correlate. Whereas Amphiaraus' first reported speech, the abuse of Tydeus, circled back to (what Eteocles and the audience, in their mediated understanding, consider) an earlier moment of the *there* and *then* that the messenger is reenacting, the second speech looks forward to a future moment of the *here* and *now* of the stage, to a speech that Eteocles does not yet know he will perform. The goddess Justice, the messenger will report in his next speech, is represented on Polynices' "newly-fashioned, well rounded shield" (642–6). When the time comes, Eteocles will base his response on a rejection of Polynices' claim to Justice (662–3, 665–7, 670–1).

¹²⁹ Zeitlin 1982: 126. Compare, too, the gap between the embedded speeches of Calchas and Agamemnon in the *Ag. parodos*, discussed above 77–80.

¹³⁰ Although the audience will have anticipated this outcome from the start, it is unclear at what point its inevitability becomes clear to Eteocles, so Thalmann 1978: 125–35. Whatever the case, once Amphiaraus has been named to the sixth gate and his Theban counterpart chosen, the fraternal pairing will have been evident.

The subsequent speech finds shape in Amphiarus' similarly phrased challenge (μητρός τε πηγὴν τίς κατασβέσει δίκη; 584).¹³¹ The seer's objection, reperformed for the Theban king in the messenger's embedded speech, "serves as the mirroring model for Eteocles in the coming scene."¹³² When Eteocles responds to his brother's shield, his voice will be a doubly mediated surrogate: a reenactment of the messenger's reenactment of Amphiarus' speech. The boundary over which the messenger has heretofore been presumed to preside alone is now complicated by another voice, that of Amphiarus.

The signal importance of Amphiarus' embedded speech becomes clear when Eteocles (and the audience) learn that the justice (τίς ... δίκη;) invoked by the seer in his attack on Polynices corresponds to the material figuration of Justice on Polynices' shield.¹³³ The "double blazon" (διπλοῦν τε σῆμα 643) shows a woman, calling herself "Justice," and a warrior wrought in gold whom, she says, she will lead back to his homeland. The messenger does not begin his report with the speaking shield, however, but rather focuses first on Polynices' own vocal expression, a "paean of conquest" (ἄλωσιμον παιῶν' 635), related in colorful *oratio obliqua* (636–8).¹³⁴ As he did with the first shields of the catalogue, the messenger couples the warrior's voice with other voices that issue forth from his shield. But where those earlier speaking shields mirrored the voices of their bearers, the vocal relationship presented here resists direct equivalence. Polynices' speech, threatening his brother with death or exile, is inverted by the voice of his

¹³¹ Zeitlin 1982: 123 "the homology of language, centering around the work *Dikē* (584), attaches the life line of Amphiarus to that of Eteocles."

¹³² Zeitlin 1982: 125. On the similarities between the two, see also DeVito 1999.

¹³³ Hence the critical role of the adjective *καινοπηγές* (newly fashioned); Eteocles has not seen his brother's new shield. The detail likely also serves, albeit obliquely, to connect the warrior's new shield with the most famous newly fashioned shield of Greek poetry, that of Achilles in *Iliad* 18.

¹³⁴ By adapting the speech to the circumstances of his performance in the *here* and *now*, the messenger transfers Polynices' address to the then-absent, now-present Eteocles into the second-person (σοὶ ξυμφέρεισθαι καὶ κτανῶν θανεῖν πέλας 636). As the very first word of the reported speech, the second person confirms that the speech we are hearing is not, in fact, being reenacted verbatim by the messenger and at the same time endows the speech with a paradoxical vividness.

shield, which promises to restore the exile to his homeland. The power of material surrogacy, complicated by the increasingly demanding models of mimesis developed in the second phase of the messenger's report, are now on full view in the multiple vocal strata that will bring Polynices, and his shield, onto the stage.

The duality of Polynices' shield, an object that speaks in a voice that is not the hero's, is not simply a matter of the two figures that adorn the blazon, but of its own internal vocal duplication. Breaking with his earlier practice, the messenger describes the speech of the shield in two distinct aspects, first attributing a voice to the figure of Justice herself, and then to the letters that convey her speech.

ἔχει δὲ καινοπηγὲς εὐκυκλον σάκος
διπλοῦν τε σῆμα προσμεμηχανημένον·
χρυσήλατον γὰρ ἄνδρα τευχιστὴν ἰδεῖν
ἄγει γυνή τις σωφρόνως ἡγουμένη·
Δίκη δ' ἄρ' εἶναι φησιν, ὥς τὰ γράμματα
λέγει· "κατάξω δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε, καὶ πόλιν
ἔξει πατρώων δωμάτων τ' ἐπιστροφάς."
τοιαῦτ' ἐκείνων ἐστὶ τᾶξευρήματα.

645

(Th. 642–9)

*He has a newly fashioned, well-rounded shield
and a double blazon crafted on it. An armed man,
wrought in gold, can be seen and a woman leading him
cautiously. She says that she is Justice, as the letters
say: "I will return this man and he will hold his paternal
city and the rights of his house." Such are the inventions of
these [objects?].*

By naming the shield as "double," Zeitlin contends, "doubling has become self-referential."¹³⁵ Mimesis, in other words, is no longer merely the means by which the shields make their way into the messenger's reports. Aeschylus has made the practice of duplication the openly acknowledged ornament of the tool as well. The vocalicity of the shield is redoubled and

¹³⁵ Zeitlin 1982: 138.

split. Its twofold mimetic surrogacy, detached from the bearer, is expressed by the messenger when he draws a distinction between the voice of Justice, who speaks only her own name (Δίκη δ' ἄρ' εἶναι φησιν), and the voice of the letters, the material surrogates of the (already material) voice of the goddess (ὥς τὰ γράμματα / λέγει). The double voice of the blazon incorporates in concrete form the surrogate relationship that has heretofore been achieved through the combination of embodied agents and their tools.

Eteocles is alive to the mimetic multiplicity that the messenger has attributed to his brother's shield. He acknowledges, for the first time, the writing that permits the warrior's material correlate to speak. But he does so only in an attempt to use the uncertainty of semblances to his advantage. Eteocles does not attribute the surrogate speech of the blazon to Polynices, since his is not the voice conveyed by the object. Nor will he concede that it is Justice who speaks through the device. Justice, Eteocles insists, is not present in Polynices' actions or his mind (662–3). She has never looked over him or held him in honor and does not do so now (664–9). For Eteocles, the voice reenacted by the messenger is nothing more than the “the golden letters, babbling on his shield” (χρυσότευκτα γράμματα ἐπ' ἀσπίδος φλύοντα 660–1). Reimagining Amphiaras' speech through an insistent materialist lens (embracing, that is, the very realm of semblances that the seer claimed to disavow), Eteocles locates the source of the shield's voice within the object itself. The letters – and the letters alone – have voice. The mimesis that the shield represents, like that of the stage on which the actor stands, only *claims* to be grounded in the reality that lies beyond its material boundaries. In fact, the *theres* and *thens* that shape the *here* and *now* of both shield and stage inhabit the very same world of mimetic semblance. Eteocles does not recognize, as Bellerophon is able to in O. 13, that *seeming* is not *not* real.

So it is that Eteocles declares his intention to stand against his brother in battle, to venture into the elsewhere from which the messenger has given form to the action of the stage.

Paired against his brother, his own unseen mimetic double,¹³⁶ Aeschylus prepares for Eteocles to join the other fighters whose voices and tools have been brought to life on the stage through the vocal surrogacy of the shield scene. Just like those men, Eteocles will find his exploits from *there* and *then* reenacted by a surrogate when the/a messenger returns once again, and for the last time, to report on his death (792–819).¹³⁷ Eteocles signals his readiness to enter this realm where men find voice through material correlates by calling for his own armor. “Quickly!” he demands “bring me my greaves, a defense against spears and stones” (φέρ’ ὡς τάχος / κνημίδας, αἰχμῆς καὶ πέτρων προβλήματα 675–6). Greaves are traditionally the first element donned in Homeric arming scenes,¹³⁸ and scholars have suggested that the call inaugurated the full-scale onstage arming of Eteocles, including, perhaps, the physical display of his own shield device.¹³⁹ Whether or not such an episode occurred (the text, it should be said, gives no indication that it did),¹⁴⁰ Eteocles’ mention of the greaves alone is sufficient to signal the assimilation of the actor on stage to the unseen drama of material tools that lies just beyond the stage.¹⁴¹ Entrusting his body and voice to the power of these objects,¹⁴² Eteocles commits himself to the theatrical artifice of instrumental surrogacy.

As Eteocles’ final on-stage act attests, the arms of war are tools for use. Aeschylus situates these objects, alongside the shields brought mimetically onto the stage through his and the messenger’s vocal reenactments, within a discourse of theatrical reenactment that reflects not only on the fratricidal

¹³⁶ Steiner 1994: 58.

¹³⁷ It is generally assumed that the messenger who reports on the battle is a different character from the scout, but the text does not require two distinct roles; so Dickinson 2009: 108, who notes that the same actor would give voice to both.

¹³⁸ Minchin 2011 provides an overview of Homeric arming scenes, with bibliography.

¹³⁹ Schadewaldt 1961, Bacon 1964, see now the discussion of Poli-Palladini 2016: 137–43.

¹⁴⁰ Taplin 1977: 159–61 argues against the staging, suggesting instead that lines 675–6 may be spurious.

¹⁴¹ Noting the materialist implications of his later claim to be “whetted” so that the words of the Chorus will not “blunt” him (τεθηγμένον τοί μ’ οὐκ ἀπαμβλυνεῖς λόγῳ 715), Zeitlin 1982: 144 says that “Eteocles becomes all sword.”

¹⁴² This materialist implication is perhaps at work in the obscure conclusion “trusting in these [things] I will go” (τούτοις πεποιθὼς εἶμι 672).

Conclusion

conflict between the sons of Oedipus but on the way in which choral song is brought to life. The redoubled voices and surrogate agency of the shield scene stand as a commentary on the complex structures of mimetic performance. Aeschylus' theatrical composition draws on both past and future to find voice in the present, relying on material scripts, both literal and figurative, that enable the repeated creation of a *here* and *now*. The *elsewheres* from which his song takes its shape may, like the shields of the messenger's reports, not be visible as physical presences on the stage, but they nevertheless determine its form. Like the shields, the semblances that find voice in Aeschylus' theatrical composition can only appear as replicas of what is absent, accessible only through the recursive folds of syncopated time. Through the surrogate reenactments of the messenger, Aeschylus invites his audience to consider the unseen tools and absent craftsmen whose work gives rise to, and is reduplicated by, the performance that comes before their eyes and ears.

Conclusion

The tools explored in this chapter attest to the deep-seated material imagination that underpins Pindar's and Aeschylus' idea of theatrical reenactment. Instruments, musical and otherwise, function as tools for joining voices, bridging the distance – both spatial and temporal – between performers both absent and present who bring song to life again and again. At once conduits of sound and vocal agents in their own right, these crafted objects expand our understanding of the intricate vocal harmonies and recursive surrogacies embedded in the compositions of our two poets. Objects, such as musical instruments and written scripts, that occupy the margins of fifth-century choral performance, allow Pindar and Aeschylus to contemplate the literal and figurative relationships between artisanal products of *there* and *then* that enable the *here* and *now* of their own artisanal product, song. The deliberate thematization of instrumental surrogacy broadens the reach of theatrical discourse to encompass the materiality of performance.

But, as we have seen throughout this chapter, the crafted tools of song also rely on the living bodies of performers to enact their recursive powers. This somatic component, which situates voice at the intersection of objects and bodies, is the subject of the [next chapter](#).

CHAPTER 4

SOMATIC SEMBLANCES

CHOEPHOROI, OLYMPIAN 8, PYTHIAN 2

The structures of vocal surrogacy that Pindar and Aeschylus develop in their songs underscore the difference between words (carriers of semantic signification) and speech (the act of vocal expression). It is this distinction that permits us to recognize the reenactment of voice, epitomized by the formal device of embedded speech, as a product of the syncopated rhythms of theatrical performance. Although words may be repeated verbatim, the context and identity of the speaker who gives them voice renders each reenactment a distinct moment within the syncopated temporal matrix of the theater. The discourse of material instrumentation explored in the [last chapter](#) makes clear that voice, at least as Pindar and Aeschylus conceive of it, is not incompatible with physical objecthood. In fact, crafted tools play a crucial role in transmitting voice between performers who are otherwise separated in time and space. But a picture of instrumental materiality built around tools and craftsmen risks overlooking the most versatile and confounding tool of choral performance: the human body.

Bodies pose something of a challenge in the study of performance, particularly pre-modern performance. Choral performance in fifth-century Greece is, in a fundamental and inescapable way, an embodied art. It fits well the broad definition set out by Erika Fischer-Lichte: “the bodily co-presence of actors [or performers] and spectators.”¹ Yet, insofar as embodied presence is an “ephemeral and transient” event,² it

¹ Fischer-Lichte 2008: 32, 34 reflecting on the work of Max Herrmann. I discuss the relationship between formal performance and the broader Butlerian notion of social performance at 13–14.

² Fischer-Lichte 2008: 33.

is the most difficult aspect of performance to access after the fact. Theorists of contemporary performance such as Diana Taylor have developed a range of strategies for addressing this impasse, particularly by looking to the practices of embodied knowledge that can transmit seemingly ephemeral events beyond the singular moment of performance.³ But for those of us who study performance in the ancient world, the immense distance between us and the bodies we wish to understand would seem to preclude such incarnate transmission. In the study of more recent performance the preservation of physical object such as costumes, props, and stage-sets – what Taylor has termed the performance “archive” – can form a palpable link to the bodies that once brought them to mimetic life.⁴ When it comes to fifth-century choral performance, even such archival connections to performing bodies are largely beyond our reach.

The vast holes in our understanding of even the most basic features of fifth-century performance are nothing less than staggering. Leaving aside the thorny questions of context and socio-religious function that have been at the forefront of recent scholarship, we know very little about the basic features of mounting a choral performance in the time of Pindar and Aeschylus. Although we do know that dramatic actors and chorus members wore mimetic masks and costumes, the form, general and specific, that they took is a subject of some debate.⁵ With regards to non-dramatic lyric, we remain largely ignorant of how a chorus would have been dressed, whether mimetic costumes or masks would have been worn or how such practices would have differed depending on sub-genre (e.g. paeon versus dithyramb).⁶ While later sources

³ Taylor 2003: esp. 1–52, Lepecki 2010, Schneider 2011: esp. 87–110, Borggreen and Gade 2013, Kartsaki and Schmidt 2015.

⁴ Taylor 2003: esp. 19–24. On Taylor’s model and the ancient world, see Hanink 2017.

⁵ On the evidence for costumes and masks Pickard-Cambridge 1988: 177–209, Wyles 2011: 5–45. On masks in particular, Halliwell 1993, Frontisi-Ducroux 1995, Marshall 1999: 188–90, Wiles 2007. On stage properties, see Revermann 2016, Tordoff 2016.

⁶ On costumes and masks in dithyramb see Schmidt 1967, recently discussed by Wellenbach 2015 who revisits the question. On mimetic costume in dithyrambic and other non-dramatic choral performance, see Csapo 2003: 86–90, Rusten 2006: 42–54, Csapo 2013: 65–80.

record dramaturgical developments with regards to stage-sets, chorus size, and so-called actor-number conventions in Athens, there is no contemporary evidence from the fifth century to support these claims, and much reason to doubt the neat teleologies of these often fantastical ancient histories of the theater.⁷ Outside of dramatic forms, we have little firm evidence to indicate how many performers would have been involved in a standard “chorus” – indeed, it is unlikely that such a standard existed.⁸ For both dramatic and non-dramatic performances, it remains unclear what specific role was played by the choregos (the chorus leader) and how and when he or she would have been distinguished from the collective.⁹ Perhaps most noteworthy is the near total absence of reliable information regarding either music or dance in the fifth century. Often we can claim little more about these vitally important features of embodied choral expression than that, whatever form they took, they were undoubtedly important.¹⁰

When it comes to discussing the embodied nature of ancient performance, things necessarily get very speculative very quickly. And yet, an exploration of the structures of reenactment within fifth-century choral song can hardly avoid the subject of bodies. Even if, given the manifest state of our ignorance, it is futile to wonder how, for instance, dance movements might have further shaped the vocal layers of the *Agamemnon* parodos, it is still possible to offer more than a simple assent. Yes, there were bodies. Yes, they made a difference. The kinds of questions that we can ask are not literal or historically verifiable ones, though they are, of course,

⁷ Csapo and Slater 1995: 221–2; see also Scullion 1994: 3–66, Di Marco 2009. On scene painting in particular, see now Small 2016.

⁸ Our clearest evidence is for the dithyrambic competitions at the City Dionysia at Athens, where choruses were comprised of fifty men or boys. We have virtually no evidence for chorus size in fifth-century dithyrambic competitions elsewhere, or for other non-dramatic choral forms in Athens. On dithyrambs, see the contributions to Kowalzig and Wilson 2013a.

⁹ See recently Csapo 2013. The possibility of solo performance of Pindar’s compositions, once popular amongst scholars, has now largely been rejected, but see Eckerman 2011.

¹⁰ On dance: Naerebout 1997, Peponi 2015, Gianvittorio 2017. On music: West 1994, Pöhlmann and West 2001, Hagel 2010.

historically informed. With so much uncertainty, we must engage with bodies in a way that is both simpler and less concrete. The performing bodies that occupy this chapter take shape within the same imaginary space in which Pindar and Aeschylus are able to converse. They are a corporeal articulation of what it meant for these two poets to imagine their songs in performance. Even if it were possible (which, of course, it is not), I make no attempt to reconstruct fifth-century choral performance *wie es wirklich war* in the theater of Dionysus at Athens, or in Hieron's court in Syracuse. The unreality, or rather the not *not* reality, of these bodies – like the conversation itself – is something to be embraced as one open window in the face of the manifest silence of the historical record.

Pindar and Aeschylus' conversation about bodies is not distinct from their conversation about voices. The bodies explored in this chapter undergo processes of substitution and surrogacy, of theatrical syncopation and anachronistic harmonizing (or, better, syncopated choreography) similar to those that characterize Pindar's and Aeschylus' meditations on mimetic voice. Theatrical performance is, after all, a kind of embodied surrogacy. The performer's body conjures the identity of someone other than him- or herself. The parameters established in my earlier analysis of embedded speech can serve as guide for beginning to think about embodied surrogacy. At a very basic level, embedded speech is itself an embodied operation. What makes embedded speech so powerful in performance (and, conversely, potentially so flat on the page) is the fact that the same mimetic body – the same performer – takes on an additional mimetic voice. The embedded speech adds a secondary surrogacy to the reenactment that constitutes the performance itself.¹¹ The chorus of Pindar's P. 1, unchanged before

¹¹ Much has been made of actors' multiple roles in dramatic performance, allowing the same phenomenal body and voice to portray multiple figures. This undoubtedly took place across the multiple plays staged on a single day at the Great Dionysia (see Knox 1972 on the *Oresteia*) and likely also in single plays (Pavlovskis 1977, Jouan 1983, Ringer 1998, Lada-Richards 2002: 408–12, Marshall 2016: 257–8). These somatic and vocal continuities are indeed significant, yet the change in costume represents a distinction between semiotic bodies not found in embedded speech.

us, speaks in the voice of Pelops. The messenger of Aeschylus' *Persians*, addressing Queen Atossa in Sousa, breathes forth the enemy war-cry heard at Salamis; his body remains "Persian," but his voice, for a moment, becomes "Greek." The power of embedded speech as a trope stems as much from somatic arithmetic (one body, two voices) as from the temporal disjunction of body and voice (the *here* and *now* of the body is not the same as that of the voice).

Approaching this juncture of body and voice from a slightly different vantage, one might say, adapting somewhat the observations of Rush Rehm, that in performance the temporal *present* is constitutive of *presence*.¹² The vocal assertion of *here* and *now* is what determines the corporeal reality of a performing body. Embodiment, viewed in this way, cannot be separated from the temporal structures of voice and, conversely, our perception of voice is as dependent on the means of expression – the body from which it comes – as it is on the content of what is said. Voice, in other words, is always a question of the body. To treat fifth-century choral performance *as performance* entails a recognition of the fact that speech cannot be separated from embodiment. The corporeal power of performance extends beyond dance or costume to constitute voice itself. As we have seen, Pindar and Aeschylus approach voice from a distinctively theatrical perspective, an outlook emblemized by the recursive layers of embedded speech. If, as I suggest, the topsy-turvy, syncopated rhythms of that formal device set out a basic pattern onto which not only voices, but bodies too can be mapped, then the *presence* of bodies – their material reality – will be as complicated as the *present* tense of speech.

The distinctly temporal inflection of this type of corporeal reduplication is explored with regards to twentieth- and twenty-first-century performance by Schneider, who invokes the idea of "temporal drag" to describe the way that embodied

¹² Rehm 2002: 11: the "absence [of the poet] makes room for the presence of the actor, who instantiates a 'present' experience that the storyteller can only recall."

performance can call attention to this surrogate relationship.¹³ Male/female drag transforms a body across gender lines while at the same time calling attention to its transgressive appropriation of identity: the female body performing on stage is rendered subversive by reminders – subtle or not – that she is the product of a man’s mimetic embodiment. Following a similar logic, “temporal drag” calls attention to the uncanny presence of bodies from other times (or places). Performers are able to mimetically embody someone whose absence is framed, required even, by the temporality of theatrical performance. Just as the female bodies of drag performers can only be created by men, so these bodies from past or future can only be conjured into being by means of another performing body in the present. The bodies in drag are not *not* women and not *not* men. Those in temporal drag are not *not* present and not *not* absent. Temporal drag nicely describes the disposition of Pindar and Aeschylus, a disposition that seeks to define bodies and embodied presence through relationships of mimetic surrogacy with other, absent bodies. If embedded speech permits voices of the *here* and *now* to be heard through the echoes and layers of voices from *theres* and *thens*, so bodies take their shape through things that are elsewhere and unseen, other bodies that are not *not* the bodies of performance.

The correspondence between vocal and embodied surrogacy is already evident in Pindar’s and Aeschylus’ emphasis on material tools as conduits of voice, as discussed in the [last chapter](#). Performing bodies are essential counterparts to tools since instruments are dependent on agents – actors, performers – to fashion and encode them and to put them to use. As conduits of voice, instruments serve as a bridge between bodies, but bodies are also tools in their own right. Athena’s aulos is not simply tool of vocal mimesis, imitating Euryale’s lament. It is also a crafted surrogate for the living snakes that pour sound from atop her head. When Eteocles’

¹³ Schneider 2011: 14, who adapts the idea from Freeman 2000: 728. Schneider notes the similar model of “archival drag” put forth by Roman 2005, and sees both gendered approaches as responses to Bhabha 1991’s description of a “temporal lag” at the intersection of race and time.

herald reenacts the Argive attackers' bodies and the bodies wrought on their shields in the same breath, he assimilates both unseen figures into a common discourse of mediated speech and action. And when Eteocles takes up his armor at the conclusion of the scene, he recasts the earlier, vocal reenactments as an explicitly corporeal undertaking.¹⁴ Enveloping himself in crafted tools, he acknowledges the instrumental character of his own performing body. The very material artifacts that have been given substance only through the surrogacy of his body become a second skin that transforms his body into a crafted tool. Material tools may merge with the vocal expressions that they convey, but they are also often indistinguishable from the bodies that use them. As Rayner notes in an exploration of twentieth-century performance, both bodies and objects represent a means of "exploiting the temporalities of theater as a temporal and material art."¹⁵ The performing body itself becomes an instrument for performance, transmitting voice, yes, but also its own somatic reality. The body is more than a material artifact, it is a *thing* constructed to reenact (σὺν ἔντεσι μῆσαι' P. 12.21).

Pindar sounds out the porous boundary between living body and crafted instrument in the raucous opening of his second dithyramb. Moving between sound and vision, bodies and the tools that they wield, Pindar's portrait of Dionysiac performance explores the many facets of musical expression and the mimetic transformation of voice by and for song. The song complicates the picture of vocal tools explored in the [last chapter](#) by extending the category of instrument to include the living bodies of performers. The passage begins with Pindar's famously enigmatic denunciation of the "false 's'" that sounds "from the mouths of men" (τὸ ὄα|ν κίβδηλον ἀνθρώποισιν ἀπὸ στομάτων 2).¹⁶ The passage sets the mouths' fabricated sounds

¹⁴ So, in discussing the *Iliad*, Bassi 1998: 60 observes that "armor is the signifier par excellence of personal identity, an identity reified in the body or bodily appearance."

¹⁵ Rayner 2006: 108.

¹⁶ There is much debate over the precise meaning of the "false san," which is generally linked to Lasus of Hermione's call for asigmatic composition. For discussion, see D'Angour 1997, Porter 2007, Porter 2010: 382.

(products adulterated (κίβδηλον) like counterfeit coins) within a complex of material instruments endowed with human voice and voices given the properties of crafted objects. Rattles cry out like singers (10–11), Naiads wail like thunder alongside Zeus’ own fire-breathing thunderbolt (12–16).¹⁷ As the soundscape develops, Athena’s aegis shrieks with serpentine voices.

... ἄλκᾶεσσα [τ]ε Παλλάδο[ς] αἰγίς
 μυρίων φθογγάζεται κλαγγαῖς δρακόντων.
 (Dith. 2.17–18)

*and the bold aegis of Athena finds voice through the cries
 of ten thousand snakes.*

Where human mouths produce the false hiss of snakes, the aegis, a material instrument, emits cries from the sibilant creatures that comprise a living chorus woven into its very fabric.¹⁸ The aegis is a composite of living bodies and artisan craft, a paradigm for the complex instrumentality explored throughout the passage. The epithet ἄλκᾶεσσα (bold or valiant), used elsewhere by Pindar only of living creatures, hints at the animate character of the device. But it is the presence of the shouting serpents, through which the tool finds voice (φθογγάζεται κλαγγαῖς δρακόντων), that most pointedly complicates our perception of the instrument. Pindar’s brief depiction does not specify the status of the snakes, but the image recalls representations of the aegis in visual art, where it is often figured as an object fashioned of living creatures, with the animated bodies of snakes intertwining to produce the armored goddess’ distinctive attire.¹⁹ Recalling the fearful serpents of Hippomedon’s shield, crafted replicas of the hundred tongues of Hesiod’s mimetic monster, as well as those that adorned the heads of the gorgons, shouting out in grief

¹⁷ Pindar’s phrasing here heightens the connection by describing the Naiad’s “thundering groans” using a rare Homeric adjective: ἐρίγδουποι στοναχαί. In Homer, the epithet is used exclusively of Zeus, with only one exception (*Il.* 11.152 of horses’ feet).

¹⁸ The marked sibilants are discussed by both D’Angour 1997: 338 and Porter 2007: 2.

¹⁹ On Athena’s aegis, see Marx 1993, Vierck 2000 (1991). Athena’s body, too, is a craft product, on which see Uhlig forthcoming-a. Animals are incorporated into Electra’s weaving in *Choephoroi*, on which see 186–7.

at the death of their sister, the screaming snakes of Athena's aegis are at once bodies and tools. In P. 12 it was Euryale to whom Athena gave perennial voice through material instrumentation. In the iconographic tradition, although Pindar makes no mention of it here, the aegis serves as the mimetic vessel of Euryale's sister, whose fearsome face is often featured amongst the writhing snakes. After turning so many men to stone, Medusa finds concrete form on a tool that gives voice to cries from bodies that are neither fully material nor fully flesh.

This is not to say that Pindar and Aeschylus viewed performing bodies in precisely the same light as material artifacts. Nevertheless, the continuities between these two spheres demand our attention. Pindar famously conceives of his own body as a site of inscription, a material conduit for the name that will constitute his song (O. 10.1–3)²⁰ and envisions Apollo's temple at Delphi as supported by golden women endowed with the power of song (*Pae.* 8.65–90).²¹ Aeschylus imagines bodies as painted images (*Supp.* 463, *Ag.* 242, *Eum.* 50)²² and the satyrs of his *Theoroi* bear likenesses of themselves to dedicate at a temple, gazing in wonder at the mute images' fidelity to their forms (εἶδωλον εἶναι ποῦτ' ἐμῇ μορφῇ πλέον τὸ Δαιδάλου μ[ι]μημα fr. 78.6–7),²³ invoking craft artifacts to underline the performing body's ability to communicate through silence.²⁴ Performing bodies are constituted by and as surrogate objects, not fully one or the other. Their composite status marks out mimetic performance itself as a construct, an artifice, in which bodies and voices are crafted to seem to be what they are not.

There are important differences between the types of bodies that Pindar and Aeschylus construct with their works, a point

²⁰ The conceit of “writing of the mind” is employed by both Pindar and Aeschylus, on which see Steiner 1994: 100–15.

²¹ Power 2011, Weiss 2016.

²² The connections between performing bodies and the plastic arts in Aeschylus, and tragedy more broadly, are explored elegantly by Hall 2006: 99–141. See also Steiner 2001: esp. 44–50.

²³ O'Sullivan 2000, Thomas 2019.

²⁴ Silent bodies were considered a hallmark of Aeschylean theater in antiquity, on which see Taplin 1972.

to which we will return in detail in the [next chapter](#). For now, however, I will focus on the parallels. For Pindar and Aeschylus, the recursive patterns of theatrical mimesis underpin a somatic imagination that situates bodies, as much as voice or material instruments, within the crease or fold of reenactment. Both poets are eager to explore how bodies are constituted in time, not just as objects existing in the *here* and *now*, but as things that find expression in surrogates, re-emerging in iterative patterns of embodied reenactment. For both, these embodied reduplications are bound up with the language of semblances and symbolism, expressions of prophetic insight and material construction.

In what follows, I offer a series of readings that apply the interpretive lessons of voice and tools developed in the preceding chapters, to the somatic sphere. I begin with an analysis of the somatic concerns that underpin the drama of Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*. I view this text as a paradigm of theatrical embodiment, and the insights developed in interpreting this play serve as a guide for thinking about performing bodies in the work of Pindar and Aeschylus more generally. This programmatic reading is followed by two relatively brief Pindaric examples, the snake portent at the completion of the Trojan wall as recounted in O. 8, and Ixion's punishment in P. 2. These two passages epitomize the way that the theatrical syncopation and corporeal surrogacy of Aeschylus' drama are manifest in Pindar's songs. The two Pindaric passages complement each other, each presenting multiple versions of embodied surrogacy, while at the same time bringing a slightly different emphasis to bear.

Constructing Orestes' Body

Bodies are placed at center-stage in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*, a play which grapples with the question of how embodied performance conveys voice and meaning, how physical form relates to identity, and – above all – how theatrical mimesis is effected through, and affected by, the materiality of the human body. Corporeal presence in *Choephoroi* is as much a

question of time as of place. As bodies are by turns concealed, disguised, and exposed, the play creates a landscape of somatic harmonies and substitutions that parallels and works in concert with techniques of vocal surrogacy.

The corporeal emphasis of *Choephoroi* is inseparable from the matricidal plot, which brings the protagonist face to face with the body that produced and nourished his own.²⁵ The physical bond between mother and son is thematized throughout the play,²⁶ and the subject is reprised in *Eumenides* where a different view of motherhood – of how bodies create bodies – emerges in the course of Orestes' trial.²⁷ The reading that I offer here looks beyond the literal act of matricide to the ways that the somatic imagination of *Choephoroi* allows Aeschylus to reflect on the corporeal nature of dramatic mimesis itself. With the murders confined to the final two hundred lines of the play, the majority of drama is devoted to preliminaries. This is not a question of planning. The *dolos* is a simple one, as Orestes himself declares (ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος 554).²⁸ Rather, we are invited to witness Orestes transform his own body into a tool of action, not simply a thing capable of committing violence against the body of his mother, but an embodied surrogate able to conjure presence from elsewhere. Through the repeated examination, delineation, and reduplication of Orestes' performing body, Aeschylus makes human flesh the central focus of his play.

The unstable binary of presence and absence sets the simple fact *of the body*, the quintessential material tool of the theatre, in doubt. As André Lepecki has observed with regard to modern dance, performance itself “emerges as critical theory precisely from its uncanny foregrounding of the split between body and presence.”²⁹ Like modern dance, the choral spectacles of Pindar and Aeschylus cultivate a “unique relation to temporality and to the manifestation of the body and of presence

²⁵ On the corporeal symbolism of Clytemnestra's maternal breast, see Griffith 1998.

²⁶ Goldhill 1984: esp. 122–70, Segal 1986c.

²⁷ See Zeitlin 1978, Goldhill 1984: 220–56.

²⁸ Differently, see Goldhill 1984: 154–5.

²⁹ Lepecki 2004: 3.

as interventions in temporality.” Their compositions invite us to consider “how it is that ‘presence’ challenges the very stability of the ‘body,’”³⁰ or, as Rehm asserts, to see performing bodies as both “an embodiment of what is present” and “a pointer to what is absent.”³¹ Through *Choephoroi* in particular, Aeschylus asks us to rethink the character of the performing body. As the bodies on stage are disguised and transformed, duplicated and divided, the unstable relationship between the body and presence becomes a tangible feature of the dramatic action.

Orestes’ Lock

The play’s interest in bodies and embodiment is made conspicuous in the opening lines, which depict the Argive homecoming of Orestes, whose return as *timaoros* has been amply foreshadowed in the *Agamemnon*.³² Despite the notoriously lacunose text,³³ it is clear that Orestes, accompanied by Pylades, entered onto the otherwise empty stage and, after offering a prayer to Hermes *Chthonios*, dedicated a part of his body – a lock of hair – at the grave of his father.³⁴

< > πλόκαμον ἱνάχῳ θρεπτήριον,
τὸν δεύτερον δὲ τόνδε πενθητήριον
(Ch. 6–7)

< > *lock of hair, an offering to Inachus, and this
second, a dedication of grief*

The lock is the first marker of the strong corporeal thematization that will run throughout *Choephoroi*. It is not simply an object. It is a part of Orestes’ body, an extension of his physical presence that is nevertheless able to be severed and transformed.³⁵ As with the bridle of Pindar’s O. 13, the

³⁰ Lepecki 2004: 6.

³¹ Rehm 2002: 11.

³² Taplin 1977: 333, Roberts 1985, Morgan 1994.

³³ Garvie 1986 ad 1–21, possible variations are presented and evaluated by West 1990: 229–33.

³⁴ Taplin 1977: 333–4.

³⁵ On the religious significance, see Pucci 1967.

audience are invited to witness the moment of the object's encoding, thus gaining an understanding that will be denied to its eventual recipient.³⁶ But even from their privileged vantage, the audience do not get to see everything. Orestes makes clear that the lock that he dedicates on stage is his second such offering (τὸν δεύτερον δὲ τόνδε), the first having been made (off-stage and before the action of the play) to the river-god Inachus upon arrival in Argos.³⁷ Mention of this prior dedication creates a temporal inflection point at the very outset of the play. Orestes' first on-stage act, the dedication of his lock, is already a reenactment of an earlier, unseen performance.³⁸

The strong demarcation of theatrical syncopation at the opening of *Choephoroi* is apt for a play that will quite overtly seek to reenact murders staged in the preceding drama (ἐν ταύτῳ βρόχῳ θανόντες 557–8).³⁹ The citational disposition of the play is shaped in important ways by its position within a connected tetralogy (a form which, so far as we can tell, found far greater favor with Aeschylus than with other tragedians). Connected dramas offer many ways of playing with dramatic time, whether through the recursive patterning of what Oliver Taplin has called “mirror scenes,” which reenact similar dramatic moments at a temporal remove, or through the radical re-envisioning of satyr drama, which can, as Lyndsay Coe has explored, “return” with a new perspective to moments “before” the action of the preceding plays.⁴⁰ At the start of *Choephoroi*, it is unclear how much time has passed between the Chorus' invocation of Orestes at the close of *Agamemnon* (οὐκ, ἐὰν δαίμων Ὀρέστην δεῦρ' ἀπευθύνῃ μολεῖν 1667) and the young man's return. The imagination of the previous play becomes

³⁶ See my discussion above, 113–28.

³⁷ The precise details of the first dedication remain unclear. But the suggestion, put forth by Solmsen 1967: 4, that both dedications are enacted in the course of the prologue is invalidated, as Garvie 1986: 51 notes, by the fact that only one lock is found by Electra. We do not know (whether from an accident of textual history or authorial choice) the specific reason for the first dedication to Inachus.

³⁸ Compare Atossa's off-stage libations in *Persians*: δεύτερον δὲ χρὴ χοᾶς γῆ τε καὶ φθιτοῖς χέασθαι (219–20), discussed below 246–7.

³⁹ Taplin 1978: 91–4.

⁴⁰ Coe 2019. On the *Proteus* in particular, see Gantz 1980: 136–7, Sutton 1984, Griffith 2002.

embodied reality in the next,⁴¹ underscoring the distinct yet enmeshed chronologies of mythical and theatrical time.

Orestes' duplicate dedication of the lock establishes a new iterative temporality within *Choephoroi* that complements the sense of belatedness – of return and replication – stemming from the structural connections between the first and second plays of the trilogy. The play's opening scene posits an unseen past, a *proteron* of Orestes' performance, that is all its own.⁴² The recursive nature of Orestes' first appearance, which will continue to inform his actions throughout the play, is unmistakably corporeal in nature, as is the act of dedication itself. The lock is a synecdochic surrogate cut from Orestes' own head. Both of the hero's dedications, seen and unseen, come from the same embodied source. The “second” lock, dedicated on stage, reenacts the absent body of the *then* and *there*.

Orestes' corporeal belatedness finds further expression in the prayer that he offers at Agamemnon's tomb. Addressing the dead man in the second person, Orestes laments that he was not present to perform his father's burial rites.

οὐ γὰρ παρών ᾤμωξα σόν, πάτερ, μόρον
οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ' ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ νεκροῦ

(Ch. 8–9)

*For I was not present to lament your fate, father, nor did
I stretch out my hand to the procession of your corpse*

The distance, both temporal and geographic, is expressed in terms of bodily proximity and touch. Orestes views his absence as a lost contact between two bodies, his own, still-living hands and the lifeless corpse of his dead father (χεῖρ' ἐπ' ἐκφορᾷ νεκροῦ). The lock is imbued with the import of Orestes' prayer,

⁴¹ This dynamic is reprised in the ever-more substantive role played by the Erinyes in the course of the trilogy, a topic that has been subtly explored by Prins 1991 and Frontisi-Ducroux 2007.

⁴² Taplin 1977: 333 notes that this effect was appreciated by Aristophanes, whose “Aeschylus” explains how it is that Orestes, the exile, can both “come” and “return” to Argos (*Frogs* 1163–5); “the single stage action has a double meaning.” Garvie 1986: 50 doubts that Aristophanes' interpretation would have been intended by Aeschylus.

a physical token of his grief (πενθητήριον) for Agamemnon.⁴³ By placing it on the tomb, Orestes replicates the haptic bond between son and father through the joining of their surrogate bodies (lock and tomb).⁴⁴ The severed body part no longer connected to the living man is a tool through which to touch his father. The lock furnishes Orestes with a mimetic, instrumental body that can be joined with the dead. Through the dedication and the corresponding prayer, Orestes reenacts the ritual he was unable to accomplish in his absence. He hopes to close the temporal gulf by performing *now* what he was not present to do *then*. The second lock – *this* one (τὸν δεύτερον δὲ τόνδε) – is a doublet of the first, but it is also a body-double for Orestes, a belated marker of his previous absence.

Through the dense opening depiction of Orestes' double reenactment of actions taken and untaken, Aeschylus establishes the iterative rhythms of the drama in a distinctly corporeal tone. Bodies, the lock makes clear, are no less implicated in syncopated rhythms of performance than is voice. As actions are folded back upon the unseen foundations of other actions, the body itself is absorbed into the surrogate structures of theatrical reenactment.

Electra Finds a Body

The arrival of Electra and the chorus of captive women interrupts Orestes' prayer to his father, formalizing Orestes' separation from the lock as he withdraws from the tomb.⁴⁵ Orestes is once again out of the action (ἐκποδών 20) as funerary

⁴³ As an extension of Orestes' prayer, the lock is a gift to the ghost of Agamemnon, to whom Orestes explicitly directs his words (τύμβου δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳ τῷδε κηρύσσω πατρὶ κλῦειν, ἀκοῦσαι. *I speak out beside this mounded tomb for my father to hear and listen.* 4–5). On the ritual aspects, see Kucharski 2004. The promise of communication between dead and living runs as a central thread throughout *Choephoroi* and, even more pointedly, *Eumenides*. On theatrical ghosts, see below 219–66.

⁴⁴ The image of outstretched hand also recalls Cassandra's proleptic description of Agamemnon's death at *Ag.* 1110–11 (προτείνει δὲ χεῖρ ἐκ / χερὸς ὀρεγομένα), adding a further layer of replication to the scene. Worman 2018: 191–2 explores the development of haptic discourse throughout the trilogy as a whole.

⁴⁵ Orestes' quick recognition of Electra presents a clear contrast to her own extended doubts about her brother's identity. It is noteworthy that in his Sophoclean and

laments take place without him, although, importantly, he remains on stage in order to observe the women undetected.⁴⁶ The withdrawal recreates Orestes' earlier absence from his father's funeral, now marked by the dedication that he has left behind. No longer truly part of a body, but not fully an inanimate object either, the lock takes on an unexpected power once it enters this new, indeterminate realm. Orestes' longing for reunion with Agamemnon proves unattainable, even through the corporeal surrogacy of the lock.⁴⁷ In its place, the lock will bridge the divide between brother and sister, communicating Orestes' presence to an unintended and unforeseen addressee.

Electra first takes notice of the lock at the close of the libation rituals.⁴⁸ She draws the Chorus' attention to the object, calling it a νέος μύθος (166). The lock, already a reiteration of Orestes' embodied past, will serve a new purpose in Electra's gaze.⁴⁹ The term μύθος might at first suggest that Electra situates the lock in the verbal realm. But her examination of the object is expressed in exclusively visual terms: ὁρῶ (168); δοξάσαι (170); ἰδεῖν (174); ἰδεῖν (176); προσεῖδεται (178).⁵⁰ More importantly, Electra and the Chorus have no doubt about the corporeal origins of the lock. It has come from a body (τίνος ποτ' ἀνδρὸς ἢ βαθυζώνου κόρης; 169), though they are unsure exactly which one. The task of locating that body, which will occupy Electra and the Chorus for the next thirty lines, introduces a new type

Euripidean guises, Orestes is not permitted to act as voyeur. Sophocles makes explicit the denial (*El.* 80–5).

⁴⁶ Πυλάδῃ, σταθῶμεν ἐκποδῶν, ὥς ἂν σαφῶς / μάθω γυναικῶν ἥτις ἦδε προτροπή. (20–1). The importance of Orestes' presence on stage throughout the subsequent lamentations of Electra and the Chorus is discussed by Rehm 2002: 86. I return to this question in more detail below 183–4.

⁴⁷ The non-appearance of Agamemnon's ghost takes on added weight in light of Clytemnestra's ghostly return in *Eumenides*.

⁴⁸ As has been noted, the discovery seems to come in response to the Chorus' prayer for an ἄνηρ ἀναλυτὴρ δόμων (160–1); Solmsen 1967: 4, Fitton Brown 1961.

⁴⁹ The phrase νέος μύθος is likely also directed at establishing the novelty of Aeschylus' treatment of the recognition scene through the dedication of a lock of hair in comparison with Stesichorus, who also employed the lock motif in his narration of Orestes' vengeance (POxy 2506 fr. 26ii). See the recent discussion of Swift 2015: 127–8.

⁵⁰ On the central theme of sight and speech as complementary modes of communication in the *Choephoroi*, see Goldhill 1984: 105–37, Yziquel 1997.

of corporeal duplication which is neither the reenactment of embodied ritual nor the doubling of the body through division. This new form of corporeal surrogacy will match body with body.

Finding no other body to which the lock might be rejoined, Electra improbably suggests herself: οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις πλὴν ἐμοῦ κείραιτό νιν. *No one apart from myself could have cut it* (172); αὐτοῖσιν ἡμῖν κάρτα προσφερῆς ἰδεῖν. *And to my own [hair] how closely you can compare its looks.* (176). In Orestes' absence his sister imagines that she, present now at the tomb, may have played the role that another body has just performed for the audience. When the Chorus suggest that Orestes may be the author of the dedication, Electra concedes the likelihood (178) but struggles to understand whether he has sent the lock in the care of someone else (ἔπεμψε χαίτην κουρίμην 180) or come himself in person (183–210).

Over the course of her deliberations, Electra's understanding of the lock undergoes a transformation. At first, Electra and the Chorus refer to the object almost exclusively as part of a human body; βόστρυχον (168),⁵¹ ἐθείραις (175), βοστρύχοις (178), χαίτην (180), and once by the broad moniker δῶρον (177). These terms stress the corporeal nature of the lock and, by implication, its natural connection to a physical body to which it might be reunited, if not rejoined. At the beginning of her reconsideration, Electra reprises her earlier position, shedding tears as she looks upon the lock.

ἔξ ὀμμάτων δὲ δίψιοι πίπτουσί μοι
σταγόνες ἄφαρκτοι δυσχίμου πλημυρίδος
πλόκαμον ἰδούση τόνδε·

(Ch. 185–7)

Thirsty drops of a fearsome flood fall, unstoppable, from my eyes as I look upon this lock.

The identification of the lock as a corporeal form (πλόκαμον) paired with a term of visual perception reaffirms Electra's

⁵¹ It is only much later that this term comes to have the generalized meaning of "ornament."

literal understanding of the object, even as her affective reaction implicates her own body as more than a disinterested viewer. The tears from her eyes (ἐξ ὀμμάτων) mark a bodily connection to the body part before her. As her hopes increase, Electra wonders if she might apply a different label to the thing she sees, that of *aglaïsmā*.

ἐγὼ δ' ὅπως μὲν ἄντικρυς τὰδ' αἰνέσω,
εἶναι τόδ' ἀγλαΐσμά μοι τοῦ φιλάτου
βροτῶν Ὀρέστου· σαίνομαι δ' ὑπ' ἐλπίδος.

(Ch. 192–4)

*For how can I openly declare that this is the adornment
of that dearest to me of mortals, Orestes – hope
fawns on me.*

Like Bellerophon in O. 13, whose evolving understanding of Athena's bridle was marked by a shift in the terminology applied to the object, Electra's language signals a new way of thinking about the lock. But where Bellerophon's perception developed from symbolic to practical (the *teras* became a tool), Electra follows an inverse trajectory from literal to symbolic. The lock is transformed from a simple clipping of hair that belongs to one body and one alone into an *aglaïsmā* that holds the promise that she will be reunited with her brother.

The terminological shift is repeated in even stronger terms in the lines immediately following. Electra names the “lock” as something to be rejected, but the “ornament” will be embraced as kin.

εἴθ' εἶχε φωνὴν ἔμφρον' ἀγγέλου δίκην,
ὅπως δίφροντις οὔσα μὴ 'κινυσσόμεν,
ἀλλ' εὖ σάφ' ἦναι τόνδ' ἀποπτύσαι πλόκον
εἴπερ γ' ἅπ' ἐχθροῦ κρατὸς ἦν τετμημένος,
ἢ ξυγγενῆς ὦν εἶχε συμπενθεῖν ἐμοί,
ἄγαλμα τύμβου τοῦδε καὶ τιμὴν πατρός.

195

(Ch. 195–200)

*If only it had a rational voice like a messenger, so that
I might not waver between two thoughts, but it would
clearly instruct me to reject this lock if it was cut from
the head of an enemy, or being a kin to me it could join in*

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my lament, an ornament for this tomb and an honor to my father.

Within the *Oresteia* the terms ἀγλαΐσμα and ἄγαλμα have a particularly pointed resonance, having been conspicuously applied to the human exchanges and sacrifices of *Agamemnon*.⁵² In those earlier instances the terms signal the uneasy mingling of animate and inanimate nature that results from the transformation of a living, human body into a sacrificial object.⁵³ Here Electra deploys the terms to reflect a similar transmutation; (part of) her brother's body has been transformed into the dedicatory object on her father's tomb. She can now see the surrogacy that Orestes attempted to enact through his dedication, joining a part of his body with his father's tomb.

In this mimetic, surrogate form, the lock can connect and harmonize with other bodies. Not only can it conjure the presence of Orestes and Agamemnon but it can join with Electra's own body in lament (συμπενθεῖν ἐμοί).⁵⁴ The communal performance invoked here may suggest song, but the melodies Aeschylus is exploring are corporeal rather than vocal in nature. When Electra expresses the hope of hearing voice from the lock (εἴθ' εἶχε φωνὴν ἔμφορον'), the object remains mute. It is not crafted as an instrument of vocal surrogacy, such as that which the messenger provided in *Seven Against Thebes* (ἀγγέλου δίκην). Within the somatic drama of *Choephoroi*, the structures of surrogacy hinge first and foremost on bodies.

Approaching the lock in this way, Electra escapes the binary, linear logic that first moved her to attach the object to a single body. As a performing surrogate, the lock can belong to no one body alone. It is a theatrical possession equally at the disposition of bodies present and absent. But even as she grasps the surrogate potential of Orestes' dedication, Electra does not entirely adopt one vision of the lock over another. She is of two minds (δίφροντις οὔσα ... 'κινυσσόμην). Her insistently double vision

⁵² ἀγλαΐσμα *Ag.* 1312 (of the smell of human sacrifices); ἄγαλμα *Ag.* 208, 741 (of Iphigenia and Helen, respectively). On the resonances of the term, see above 99–100, with bibliography.

⁵³ Scodel 1996, Wohl 1998: 67–117.

⁵⁴ Wiles 1988: 85 asserts that “momentarily actor and hair become one.”

invokes the twofold nature of embodied reenactment itself. As Erika Fischer-Lichte has argued, there is a certain duality inherent in all performing bodies, insofar as they appear before the audience in two distinct forms at the same time; a “semi-otic” body that corresponds to their mimetic persona and a “phenomenal” body that retains the traces of their off-stage identity.⁵⁵ Even as the performer is physically transformed into “Oedipus” or “Agamemnon,” he does not entirely discard the living body – tall or short, old or young, graceful or stilted – through which he conjures each mimetic role. Extending Fischer-Lichte’s model to Electra’s double vision of the lock as both clump of hair and an embodied surrogate of (her brother’s) absence, we can see that Aeschylus invokes a two-fold corporeal discourse that attributes a “phenomenal” and “semiotic” status to the bodies within the mimetic world of the drama. The lock functions as an embedded analogue to the actor’s body, serving as both literal (phenomenal) marker of its source and a mimetic (semiotic) instrument of surrogate embodiment. By bringing these two bodies into view, Electra’s discourse adds a further layer to the theatrical corporeality that began with Orestes’ replicated dedication.

Still unresolved about the status of the lock, Electra notices the footprints that have been left around the tomb, markers which she immediately identifies as another mute encoding of her brother’s body.

καὶ μὴν στίβοι γε, δεύτερον τεκμήριον,	205
ποδῶν ὅμοιοι τοῖς τ’ ἐμοῖσιν ἐμφερεῖς.	
καὶ γὰρ δὴ ἐστὼν τῷδε περιγραφὰ ποδοῖν,	
αὐτοῦ τ’ ἐκείνου καὶ συνεμπόρου τινός.	
πτέρναι τεσσάρων θ’ ὑπογραφαὶ μετρούμεναι	
εἰς ταῦτο συμβαίνουσι τοῖς ἐμοῖς στίβοις·	210
πᾶρ᾽ ἐστι δ’ ὥδεις καὶ φρενῶν καταφθορά.	

(Ch. 205–11)

And look – footprints! A second token, answering exactly to those of my feet. But there are traces of two feet, of that man and some companion. The undersides of the sinews and

⁵⁵ Fischer-Lichte 2008: 87–9.

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outlines measure equally to my own footprints. I am awash in pain and confusion.

The second token establishes a complex web of corporeal correspondences. The prints are a reduplication of the lock, another marker of Orestes' now-absent presence that will induce Electra to perform her interpretive engagement anew. This δεύτερον τεκμήριον is also an echo of Orestes' repeated ritual offering (δευτερος πενθητήριος) at the opening of the play, mapping Electra's reenactment onto the iterative patterns already set out by her brother. Her second attempt to join her body with Orestes' reminds us that she is reenacting a reenactment. The "before" which Electra is trying to grasp – the moment of Orestes' dedication – is a belated performance with its own unseen "before." The multiplicity of correspondences is further encoded in the doubling of the prints themselves which record the steps of two bodies (δύ' ἐστόν), that of Orestes and a companion. The acknowledgment of Pylades' silent presence draws attention to his status as on-stage doublet, a second body that ensures that all of Orestes' actions are immediately corporally redoubled.

Electra's interpretive reenactment is plainly informed by what has come before. Alert to the multiplicity of somatic surrogacy in this second encounter, Electra sees the semiotic power of the prints, which she aligns with the modalities of textual communication (περιγραφά, ὑπογραφαί),⁵⁶ alongside the phenomenal reality of the bodies that formed them (ποδοῖν, πτέρναι τερόντων). Like the lock, the footprints are markers of Orestes' embodied presence, formed from his feet and sinews. But the prints were never part of Orestes. They are vestiges, shadow images of Orestes' positive form.⁵⁷ These negative

⁵⁶ Steiner 1994: 35. The prints are twice referred to by the unusual term, στίβοι (205, 210), the same one that Apollo uses to unmask Hermes' deceitful double footprints in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* (352, 353), a text that is considered by a number of contemporary scholars to be a meditation on writing, so Bergren 1982 and Steiner 1994: 42–4. Cf. *Ag.* 411. In his discussion of Pindar's N. 6 (πότμος ἄντιν' ἔγραψε δραμεῖν ποτὶ στάθμαν 6–7), Schmid 1998: 71–3 notes how the poet plays upon the ambiguity of terminology that can "denote either letters or marks scratched on the earth."

⁵⁷ Cf. *Ag.* 414ff. (πόθωι δ' ὑπερποντίας / φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν. κτλ.) on which see Steiner 1995.

traces are not simply further removed from their author; their very existence is predicated on his absence.⁵⁸

Once again, Electra seeks to solve the somatic problem posed by the prints by means of her own body. She sees that the feet match her own (ὅμοιοι τοῖς τ' ἑμοῖσιν ἐμφερεῖς), just as the lock had matched her hair (αὐτοῖσιν ἡμῖν κάρτα προσφερῆς ἰδεῖν). But the reperformance is a duplication with a difference as Electra immediately recognizes Orestes as their creator. Despite the somatic correspondence, Electra knows that the marks do not come from her body but from a matching form now absent. Importantly, this does not stop her stepping into the traces her brother has left. Placing her own feet where her brother's have just been (συμβαίνουσι τοῖς ἑμοῖς στίβοις), Electra reprises her earlier haptic gesture of holding the lock up to her own head. Although the action is a replication, the intention is distinct. Electra knowingly steps into the space that Orestes has left empty. She measures his absence with her presence and conjures her brother's body with her own.

Letting Orestes' earlier performance give shape to her movements, Electra retraces her brother's course around the tomb. The somatic equivalence between the siblings – the identical appearance of their hair and feet – gives rise to an embodied reenactment as Electra literally repeats her brother's steps. Electra's corporeal replication of Orestes' movements is the conspicuous culmination of a mirror structure that was inaugurated by Electra's invocation of Hermes *Chthonios* (Ἑρμῆ χθόνιε 124)⁵⁹ reprising the address of her brother's earlier prayer.⁶⁰ But whereas Electra's vocal echo was an unwitting correspondence, her embodied reperformance is a deliberate act of mimesis.

The scene fosters a distinctly corporeal model of theatrical absence and presence. It translates the ventriloquism

⁵⁸ Jouanna 1997: 74–5.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Ch.* 1 (Ἑρμῆ χθόνιε). On the significance of the chthonic god in the play as a whole, see Garvie 1970.

⁶⁰ The Chorus too have been doublets of Orestes insofar as the bloody wounds across their cheeks and rent clothes that mark their grief mirror the embodied mourning that Orestes performs by cutting the lock.

of embedded speech into a discourse of somatic reduplication. The lock does not find the voice Electra had hoped for (εἴθ' εἶχε φωνήν ἔμφορον' 195). rather, it conveys meaning through bodily reenactment. Instead of placing the voices of multiple speakers in a single mouth, Orestes' lock and footprints permit multiple bodies to inhabit a single space, to undertake the same movements. As with embedded speech, the somatic superfluity is underwritten by the syncopated character of mimetic performance. The markers of Orestes' body are signs of his past presence and present absence. They are physical instantiations of the theater's temporal involutions that form a bridge between corporeal present and past. Through them, Aeschylus is able to dramatize the mechanics of embodied surrogacy by permitting Electra to fill the place of her brother with her own body.

Electra's reenactment is only possible because Orestes is no longer there. His present absence, emblemized by the negative imprints left by his feet, creates the space for the presence of Electra's embodied reperformance. Footprints cannot be retraced until their maker is gone. Yet Orestes' absence from the dramatic stage is not total. He has remained on stage throughout his sister's entire reenactment, out of sight of Electra and the Chorus but not of the audience. Orestes' continued presence as an observer transforms the stage into what Rehm has called a "self-referential, or metatheatrical, space" with Orestes serving as a model of theatrical spectatorship from within the drama.⁶¹ But the analogy is complicated by the fact that Orestes is implicated in the scene that plays out before him in a way that traditional audiences are not. The spectacle that Orestes witnesses is a reenactment of movements that he has marked out. It is his own body that he is watching Electra try to recover, inhabit, reprise.

The instability of the scene is made evident in the confusion that results when Orestes reveals himself – his body – to Electra. Stepping back into the dramatic action, Orestes tells Electra that she has come into view (εἰς ὄψιν ἦκεῖς 215) of the

⁶¹ Rehm 2002: 86.

one she has been seeking. His words underline the unspoken reciprocity that has been attendant throughout the preceding scene. Who is the audience in Orestes' formulation and who the spectacle? Orestes' return to the tomb may have granted Electra the sight (*opsis*) she has sought, but her reenactment has also permitted him to witness the spectacle (*opsis*) of his own body. The uncertainty is not lost on Electra who finds the sight of Orestes' body, fully present before her, at odds with her visual engagement with his earlier parts and traces and responds with disbelief. Electra's confusion does not stem from a problem of language, or even speech. Orestes could not be plainer in expressing his identity: ὅδ' εἰμί· μὴ μάτευ' ἐμοῦ μᾶλλον φίλον. *I am he. Search not for anyone more dear than me* (219).⁶² The problem stems from Orestes' embodied presence, as he accurately diagnoses. His sister is unable to recognize him in the flesh, although she had seen his presence in the lock and the footprints by the tomb. Her clarity of vision when she had seemed to see (ἐδόκεις ὄραν 228) is replaced by doubt now that she sees (ὀρώσα 225) him before her. Unlike Bellerophon, who met the semblance of Athena's speech with suspicion (εἰπεῖν ἔδοξεν O. 13.71–2), Electra places her trust in performance above reality. Having conjured Orestes' presence through her own embodied reenactment, Electra views his unmediated corporeal form as a deception (δόλον 220) instead of a revelation. She struggles to move between the two modes of perception, between the semblances and surrogate performances through which she replicated her brother's absent body and the seeming clarity of his physical presence before her.

In the face of his sister's incomprehension, Orestes, although present before her, avails himself of the surrogate semblances through which he had *seemed* to appear to Electra in his absence. He reprises his sister's earlier language of autopsy and measurement,⁶³ asking her to replicate her previous gestures by matching the lock against both of their heads.

⁶² Cf. *Od.* 16.204–5 οὐ μὲν γάρ τοι ἔτ' ἄλλος ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεύς, / ἄλλ' ὅδ' ἐγὼ τοιόσδε. Goldhill 1984: 183–95 explores the Odyssean models behind Orestes' *nostos*.

⁶³ Goldhill 1984: 129.

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σκέψαι τομῇ προσθεῖσα βόστρυχον τριχὸς
σαυτῆς ἀδελφοῦ σύμμετρον τῷ σῶϊ κάρα.

(Ch. 229–30)

*Look and hold up the lock of hair to where it was cut, it is
your brother's matching exactly to your head.*

Orestes unites the three cognate bodies – Electra's, the lock's, and his own – to make clear what his words could not: that he is indeed Orestes. The gesture reveals his body to be the one matched by both surrogates who have been performing in his absence. The phenomenal and semiotic bodies of the lock are both affirmed as Orestes and his sister demonstrate their equal, if asymmetrical, claim to the corporeal tool.

The verisimilitude of the recognition scene in *Choephoroi* has been the subject of criticism since antiquity.⁶⁴ Euripides famously ridiculed Aeschylus for the implausible claim that the hair and footprints of a brother and sister would be a perfect match.⁶⁵ His assessment that such equivalence rarely occurs outside the theater is undoubtedly correct. But the criticism that Aeschylus' depiction of the siblings' encounter lacks realism can also help us to understand the aims of the scene with greater precision. The perfect correspondence of the bodies that Aeschylus constructs is not drawn in naturalistic terms because realism, understood as the conditions that obtain outside of drama, is itself at odds with the theatrical reality, the somatic conditions of mimetic performance, that is put under scrutiny in this scene, and this play as a whole. The bodies at stake here are the living instruments of the theater, not the realistic forms of fifth-century Athens' historical *oikoi* or *agora*. Orestes and Electra possess bodies only insofar as they are embodied performers, reenacting a mimetic drama and retracing each other's actions on stage. Their phenomenal bodies have been transformed for their dramatic roles by the costumes and masks that have recreated the semiotic bodies of

⁶⁴ The potent afterlife of this scene as a theatrical *topos* can be interpreted as confirmation of its own emphasis on the nature of dramatic mimesis, Rehm 2002: 85.

⁶⁵ On the relationship between the two scenes, see Solmsen 1967, Jouanna 1997, Davies 1998, Torrance 2011, Zeitlin 2012, Torrance 2013: 14–31.

mythical heroes upon the stage. It is from these masks, tools of the performers' corporeal surrogacy, that their perfectly matching hair is found.

Dressing up

Having failed to fully convince Electra through his reclaiming of the lock, one might well expect Orestes to undertake a reenactment through his footprints. But rather than turn once more to these markers of absent presence and surrogate embodiment, Orestes introduces a final, as yet unidentified, link between the siblings' bodies in the form of the cloak that Electra herself wove for him before his exile from Argos.

ἰδοῦ δ' ὕφασμα τοῦτο, σῆς ἔργον χερός,
σπάθης τε πληγὰς ἡδὲ δὲ θήρειον γραφήν

(Ch. 231–2)

*Look at this weaving, the work of your hand, the blows of
your shuttle and the image of wild beasts.*

Unlike the other objects, formed of and by Orestes' body, this one is the product of his sister's body, the work of her hands.⁶⁶ The emphasis on artisan craft, as well as the shared but distinct relationship of Electra, as maker, and Orestes, as user, situates the object within the instrumental discourse explored in the [last chapter](#). Yet what the cloak conveys is not voice, but body. It is as much a marker of Orestes' corporeal presence as the lock and footprints.

The presentation of the cloak continues the visual focus that has marked the scene as a whole (ἰδοῦ), and the object in its insistent materiality offers yet another perspective on Orestes' body and its relationship to the other bodies of the stage.⁶⁷ The shared garment reprises the thematization of woven textiles that Aeschylus first began to develop in the *Agamemnon*, most notably through the splendid tapestry on which the returning

⁶⁶ Shea 2008: 52 discusses the gender dynamics of the object.

⁶⁷ On vision, see Goldhill 1984: 110–38. Steiner 1994: 35 notes that the weaving represents the culmination of a progression “moving from an ‘excerpt’ to an ‘imprint’ to a full-fledged pictogram.”

king is induced to tread.⁶⁸ More importantly, as an article of clothing, the third marker of somatic presence is also constitutive of Orestes' physical body. It creates the performative skin, what Karen Bassi calls the "hyperbolically clothed body" of the actor "which is at once displayed and concealed by his costume and mask."⁶⁹ The cloak is (part of) what has generated Orestes' embodied presence within the play – and as such, it is the paradigmatic marker of his dramatic identity.⁷⁰ This is in part because Electra can recognize the weaving as her own work (σῆς ἔργον χερός). The haptic connection that Orestes had lost when he was unable to reach his hands out to his father is reimagined in the mediating object that figuratively wraps his sister's hands around him.⁷¹ But, in another sense, the cloak *is* Orestes. Orestes gives body to the cloak that he wears on his back, and, by the same token, the cloak gives body to Orestes, defining his identity in a way that no other mark of his body is able to do. His physical identity is constructed from the outside in. When he takes the cloak off he will, quite literally, become someone else.

If Electra's weaving establishes the kindred relationship between brother and sister, the shared garment also looks forward to the Phocian disguise that Orestes will soon don, covering his body in another costume to take on a new identity. The *dolos* that Electra had accused him of weaving for her (ἀλλ' ἦ δόλον τιν', ὦ ξέν', ἀμφί μοι πλέκει; 220), and which he will deploy against Clytemnestra, will be

⁶⁸ There is a wealth of scholarship on the complex web of textiles and textile imagery in the *Oresteia*. Most recently see Mueller 2015: 48–59, who offers a powerful reading that places emphasis on the material properties of the trilogy's textiles, and Bakola 2016, both with bibliography.

⁶⁹ Bassi 1998: 99.

⁷⁰ As Rehm 2002: 170 observes, "by extending the body, garments carry their own meanings." Macleod 1975, Sider 1978, Tarkow 1980, Griffith 1988, Morrell 1996, Lee 2004, and Allen-Hornblower 2016: 205–7 explore costume in the *Oresteia*, but only Blasina 2003: 217–31 makes reference to Electra's weaving and Orestes' later deception scene(s), to which I turn in a moment. Mueller 2015: 65–8 details the relationship between costume and character in Euripides' version of the story. See also Said 2007's brilliant treatment of Aeschylus' thematization of clothing in *Persians*.

⁷¹ Sider 1978: 26 claims that the cloth would have been "held up" rather than worn by Orestes, but, as Blasina 2003: 218 observes, there is no reason to believe that the object does not adorn his body throughout the scene.

performed through somatic tools that reshape his body in the same fashion as the cloak through which he reveals himself to his sister.⁷² This second meditation on Orestes' embodied agency continues the themes inaugurated by the recognition scene – the paradox of simultaneous presence and absence, the reduplicated and divided nature of theatrical bodies, the difficulty of distinguishing between bodies and their material markers – and adds to them an explicit dynamic of somatic disguise and dissimulation that resonates even more powerfully with the mimetic properties of the drama of which he is part.

The openness with which Orestes plans his *dolos* onstage, in clear view of the audience, continues the emphasis on exposing moments of theatrical “coding” inaugurated by Orestes' on-stage (albeit duplicate) dedication of the lock. The exposure of his duplicity stands in marked contrast to the way that *Agamemnon* presented the shadowy deceptions of Clytemnestra. In the earlier play, Clytemnestra's deceit drew its power from the dark recesses of the house (μυχόθεν *Ag.* 96).⁷³ Her dissimulations, a matter of false speech rather than false identity or physical disguise, become apparent only in retrospect, with her triumphant disavowal of the fawning words she had offered to her husband upon his return.⁷⁴ *Chorephoroi*, by contrast, exposes deception before it is undertaken. The audience are witness to Orestes' cutting of the lock, and more pointedly, to the crafting of his plot against his mother. We are invited to consider, in a way that *Agamemnon* did not permit, the theatrical temporality by which performance is predicated on previous actions and bodies come into view through the absence of other bodies.

⁷² Orestes' response to Electra αὐτὸς κατ' αὐτοῦ τὰρα μηχανορραφῶ (221) employs the *hapax legomenon* μηχανορραφέω (weave a device). The term, likely an Aeschylean coinage, emphasizes the cloth/costume that will be at the heart of Orestes' subsequent deception.

⁷³ The same place from which her portentous dream will emerge: ἀμβόαμα μυχόθεν ἔλακε (34–5). The form μυχόθεν appears only in these two places in extant archaic and classical poetry.

⁷⁴ Bednarowski 2015: 183–91, 197–8.

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In clarifying his deceitful intentions well before encountering his mother, Orestes' outlines in explicit terms the mimetic nature of the *dolos* he will perform.

ξένω γὰρ εἰκώς, παντελῇ σαγὴν ἔχων, 560
ἦξω σὺν ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' ἐφ' ἐρκείους πύλας
Πυλάδῃ † ξένος τε † καὶ δορύξενος δόμων·
ἄμφω δὲ φωνὴν ἦσομεν Παρνησιίδα
γλώσσης αὐτὴν Φωκίδος μιμουμένω.
(Ch. 560–4)

*In the guise of a stranger, with complete traveling gear, I will
go into the palace gates with Pylades here as † a stranger
and † an ally of the house. We will both speak in Parnassian
voice, imitating the shout of a Phocian tongue.*

Orestes and Pylades will literally play the part of Phocian strangers, concealing their true identities with travelers' equipment and foreign-sounding speech. The transformation involves both voice and body, but these facets play out in markedly different ways.

As discussed in [Chapter 1](#), Orestes' embrace of theatrical role-playing sees him proleptically scripting dialogues for the traveler he will impersonate, speaking in the as-yet unheard voices of his interlocutors alongside his own.⁷⁵ But when the *dolos* is finally undertaken, Orestes' desire to adopt Parnassian speech (φωνὴν Παρνησιίδα) is left unfulfilled.⁷⁶ The omission echoes the unheard messenger's voice (φωνὴν ἔμφρον' ἀγγέλου δίκην) that Electra hoped to hear from the lock. The deception, like the recognition scene before it, will be a question of body over voice. When he finally addresses Clytemnestra, appearing in the guise of the Daulian stranger, Orestes will not only dress the part, but call our attention to it.

ξένος μὲν εἰμι Δαυλιεύς ἐκ Φωκέων,
στείχοντα δ' αὐτόφορτον οἰκεία σαγῆ
εἰς Ἄργος,
(Ch. 674–6)

⁷⁵ Above, 59–60.

⁷⁶ Despite his expressed intention to adopt the vocal, as well as physical, attributes of a Phocian traveler, Orestes continues to speak in an unmarked Attic dialect when he appears in his disguise. For discussion, see Garvie 1986: 196–7.

*I am a foreigner, a Daulian from Phocis, coming here to
Argos bearing my own traveling sack*

Orestes' overt gesture to his traveling gear (σαγῆ) signals that the costume now worn on the body as (if) his own (αὐτόφορτον οἰκεῖα) is the same tool of embodied deception that he invoked when plotting the *dolos* (ξένω γὰρ εἰκώς, παντελῇ σαγὴν ἔχων 560). The traveling sack, like the lock, is an instrument of the body that forms a link between surrogate and semblance. Orestes constructs his new identity on the model of the recognition scene by deploying the complex relationship between bodies and objects to reflect on the nature of mimetic presence and identity. Disguised in the appurtenances of a Phocian traveler, Orestes enlists the material tools in service of his embodied impersonation, creating a body that can compose the tale of his fictional past.⁷⁷ This type of redoubled embodied mimesis is a familiar hallmark of comic drama, where, as Mario Telò has persuasively shown, costumes represent a particularly potent means of reflecting on the fabrication of performing bodies, and, more pointedly, facilitating the parodic imitation of tragic bodies.⁷⁸ Though it may lack the explicitly self-referential language of comedy, Aeschylus' presentation of Orestes in disguise is no less pointed a reflection on the theatrical creation of the mimetic body.

The self-conscious physical transformation frees Orestes from the limitations of a notionally single, indivisible body. As the Daulian stranger, Orestes weaves multiple identities for himself, conjuring distinct bodies and voices through which to act out his dramatic ruse. His mimetic performance draws on and amplifies the somatic rationale of lock and footprints. He is able to speak of himself as other and elsewhere even as he stands insistently present on the stage, dividing himself into

⁷⁷ The centrality of Orestes' active deception to Aeschylus' dramatization of the myth can be seen even more clearly through comparison with Sophocles' quite different approach. Where Orestes' false speech is the keystone of the *Choephoroi*, Sophocles assigns the role of *pseudangelos* to the Paedagogus in his *Electra*, presenting us with a hero constitutionally incapable of sustaining any type of verbal or physical dishonesty in the face of his sister.

⁷⁸ Telò 2016.

Constructing Orestes' Body

a complex web of corporeal and vocal fabrications. When he reports the false words of (the equally fictitious?) Strophius, he conjures the voice of his imagined interlocutor in embedded speech, adding a further layer of vocal impersonation to his corporeal deception.

ἀγῶνος πρὸς ἀγῶνι· εἶπε συμβαλὼν ἀνὴρ
 ἐξιστορήσας καὶ σαφηνίσας ὁδόν,
 Στροφίος ὁ Φωκεύς· πεύθεομαι γάρ ἐν λόγῳ·
 “ἐπείπερ ἄλλως, ὦ ξέν’, εἰς Ἄργος κίεις,
 πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας πανδίκως μεμνημένος
 τεθνεῶν· Ὅρεστην εἶπέ, μηδραμὸς λάθη·
 εἴτ’ οὖν κομίζειν δόξα νικήσει φίλων,
 εἴτ’ οὖν μέτοικον, εἰς τὸ πᾶν αἰεὶ ξένον,
 θάππειν, ἔφετμάς τάσδε πόρθημευσον πάλιν.
 νῦν γὰρ λέβητος χαλκεῖου πλευρώματα
 στοποδὸν κέκευθεν ἄνδρος εὖ κεκλαυμένου.”
 τοσαῦτ’ ἀκούσας εἶπον.

(Ch. 677–88)

An unknown man chanced upon me who was unknown to him – his name was Strophius of Phocis, I later learned from our conversation – and, having inquired and learned of my journey, he said “Since, stranger, you are traveling to Argos, remember to tell the parents of Orestes that he is dead. Do not forget! For whether the opinion of his dear ones will be to fetch him, or to bury him as a metic, a stranger for ever more, bring their instructions back to me. For as it is a bronze urn keeps the ashes of a man who has been well lamented.” Having heard such things, I have said them.

Orestes' report of his own death is encased in the syncopated temporality of past speech made present.⁷⁹ The mimetic performance of the Daolian stranger, like that undertaken by Electra through the footprints, locates "Orestes" elsewhere, in the *there* and *then*. So confident is Orestes in his control of absence and presence through his doubly mimetic performance (impersonating the Daolian stranger impersonating Strophius) that he dares to speak his own name to the

⁷⁹ The vivid imperative within the speech (εἰπέ 682) stands in marked contrast to the temporality of framing language, which employs near homonyms to signal both past and present speech: εἰπε 677; τοσαῦτ' ἀκούσας ἔειπον 688.

mother who bore him (τεθνεῶτ' Ὀρέστην εἰπέ).⁸⁰ The name is as mimetically mediated as his costumed body, scripted for him (or, rather, for his mimetic surrogate, the Daulian) by the voice that he now calls back from a past that never was (εἰπέ). Orestes' vocal bravado is matched by an equally bold claim of distance from his somatic self when he imagines his body as a corpse, the same unattainable body of elsewhere that his father has in fact become.⁸¹ From the safety of his traveler's disguise, Orestes transforms his own flesh into ashes, wrapping himself in the metal casing of a bronze urn (λέβης χαλκῆος), a macabre analogue to the corporeal instrument of his mimetic traveler's garb.⁸²

As the Daulian stranger, Orestes inhabits the embodied theatricality that he and his sister traced out through the play's opening scenes. Orestes divides himself across time and space. He projects his new body into a false past, faithfully reenacting an exchange that never took place, and transforms himself into a stranger to his own mother, conjuring the image of his own dead body contained in an urn. His deception enacts the theatricality of physical flesh. Employing words and material props alike to take on new mimetic identities, Orestes creates a reality in which his body seems to be other than it is. Amidst the many *theres* and *thens* that underscore the mimetic *now* of his encounter with his mother, Orestes reveals the malleability of his performing body, the product of a virtuosic costume that, once woven, can make a Daulian (or an Orestes) of anyone.

⁸⁰ Again Sophocles presents a commentary on the boldness of the *dolos*. His Orestes' inability to go through with the deceit in the face of his sister's grief (1180ff.) stands in contrast to his earlier boastful confidence in the stratagem (59–64): τί γάρ με λυπεῖ τοῦθ', ὅταν λόγῳ θανάων / ἔργοισι σωθῶ κάξενέγκωμαι κλέος; / δοκῶ μὲν οὐδὲν ῥῆμα σὺν κέρδει κακόν· / ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον πολλάκις καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς / λόγῳ μάττην θνήσκοντας· εἶθ', ὅταν δόμους / ἔλθωσιν αὖθις, ἐκτετίμηνται πλέον·

⁸¹ Rehm 2002: 85–6.

⁸² The urn, which harkens back to the first stasimon of the previous play *Ag.* 442–4 (ἀντήνορος σποδοῦ γεμίζων λέβητας εὐθέτους) will, of course, be famously thematized by Sophocles as a meditation on theatrical presence and absence. See, recently, the excellent treatment of Mueller 2015: 111–33.

Becoming the Snake

Whatever the power of Orestes' corporeal disguise, the final encounter with his mother requires him to step out of his mimetic impersonation of the Daulian stranger and inhabit the body of Orestes once more. The return to a "true" body, however, requires yet another corporeal transformation, one that will be informed by the patterns of somatic surrogacy and embodied reenactment developed through the recognition scene and Phocian deception. The thematization of the theatrical body culminates in the construction of Orestes' matricidal body as a surrogate to the snake at the breast in his mother's dream. Orestes' bestial form, already inscribed on his body through the wild creatures (θήρειον γραφήν 232) woven into his sister's cloak, is also a body composed from the outside, another role taken up to be performed. But unlike in the previous scenes, in which the somatic force of Orestes' embodied presence was matched by the material reality of the objects through which it was constituted (ready markers of the distinction between the phenomenal and the semiotic), now Orestes' body must be created from something unseen and absent, a dream image whose surrogate body is at once less substantive, yet more genuine, than any yet seen on the stage.

The first mention of Clytemnestra's dream comes from the Chorus early in the parodos, when we learn of the "midnight shout" that rang out from the recesses of the house (ἄωρόνυκτον ἀμβόαμα μυχόθεν ἔλακε 34–5).⁸³ But it is not until just before Orestes' Phocian deception that we hear of the dream's content. Once the reunion with his sister has been fully achieved, Orestes' thoughts turn to the reason for the women's fortuitous visit to the tomb.⁸⁴ At Orestes' bidding and encouragement, the Chorus report what they know of the vision.

⁸³ See the discussion of Moreau 1997. On the connection between this cry and those of the *Agamemnon* parodos, see Heath 1999b: 404 n. 29.

⁸⁴ Insofar as the dream is the reason that Electra and the Chorus visit Agamemnon's tomb, the snake might be called the ultimate unseen body behind the siblings' reunion.

Somatic Semblances

Ορ. ἤ καὶ πέπυσθε τοῦναρ ὥστ' ὀρθῶς φράσαι;
 Χο. τεκεῖν δράκοντ' ἔδοξεν, ὥς αὐτὴ λέγει.
 Ορ. καὶ ποῖ τελευτᾷ καὶ καρανοῦται λόγος;
 Χο. ἐν σπαργάνοισι παιδὸς ὀρμίσαι δίκην.
 Ορ. τίνας βορᾶς χρῆζοντα, νεογενὲς δάκος;
 Χο. αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαστὸν ἐν τῶνείρατι.
 Ορ. καὶ πῶς ἄτρωτον οὐθαρ ἦν ὑπὸ στύγους;
 Χο. ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι.
 Ορ. οὔτοι μάταιον ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι.

530

(Ch. 526–34)

Or: Did you learn of the dream so as to reveal it accurately?
Ch: She seemed to give birth to a snake, as she says.
Or: What happened? How does the story end?
Ch: She wrapped it in swaddling clothes, like a child.
Or: What did it eat, the newborn beast?
Ch: She gave it her breast in the dream.
Or: How was her udder not harmed by the monster?
Ch: It was. It drew blood along with milk.
Or: May this vision not be an idle one.

The dream, like the recognition scene and Orestes' *dolos*, is a thing of semblances, reported speech, and, above all, of bodies.⁸⁵ The birth of the snake, reported to the Chorus second-hand, is something that Clytemnestra *seemed* (ἔδοξεν) to enact, a performance within the elsewhere of the dream space.⁸⁶ The mimetic language recalls Electra's engagement with the semblances of her brother's body, which she *seemed* to see (ἔδοκεῖς ὀρᾶν) through the surrogacy of the lock and prints. Semblances run throughout the Chorus' description of the snake itself, which is swaddled in cloth (ἐν σπαργάνοισι) as if it were a baby (παιδὸς δίκην). The serpentine body of the snake is disguised by the infant's dress, a costumed dissimulation that mirrors the deceptive traveling equipment that Orestes will

⁸⁵ Compare *Ag.* 1217–20: ὁρᾶτε τούσδε τοὺς δόμοις ἐφημένους / νέους ὀνείρων προσφερεῖς μορφώμασιν; On dreams in the *Oresteia*, see Lévy 1983, Mace 2002, Mace 2004, Catenaccio 2011.

⁸⁶ For Goldhill 1984: 155 the relation of mother and child, represented by the verb τεκεῖν (527), is the central link between “giving birth and narrative, but also ... the common point between the dream and events, shifting between its use as a metaphor, a symbol, and its use to express the ‘literal’ relation between parents and children.” Generational themes in the play are also explored in the recent work of Föllinger 2003: 74–103, Gagné 2013: 394–415, and Chiesi 2014: 82–146.

soon adopt. The disguised body catches Orestes' attention. His initial questions about the creature are vague (ἦ καὶ πέπυσθε τοῦναρ ... ; καὶ ποῖ τελευτᾷ ... ;), but he becomes curious about the specifics once he learns that the snake is playing the role of a child. He focuses on the corporeal character of the twofold beast. He asks what the creature eats (τίνος βορᾶς χρῆζοντα), trying to understand its body by determining how that body is fed. He demands to know if Clytemnestra can put it to her breast (καὶ πῶς ἄτρωτον οὔθαρ), a query that seeks to comprehend the association of two bodies that appear so dissimilar. As the somatic details mount, the snake becomes ever more possessed of a body, its status as a pure semiotic form yields to a more complex picture of appetite, nourishment, substance.

The questions reflect Orestes' confusion at the prospect of this aberrant body, yet he comes to the rather unexpected conclusion that the snake, a semblance born of semblances, should not be dismissed as "idle" fantasy (οὔτοι μάταιον ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι). The identification of the snake as a "vision" or "spectacle" (ὄψανον) recalls Orestes' claim that his sister had come into the sight (ὄψις) that she had long desired. As with the earlier usage, the language of spectacle invites considerations of somatic reduplication.⁸⁷ Orestes quickly recognizes the similarities between himself and the snake. The snake, like Electra, is an interchangeable surrogate of Orestes himself, another sibling through whom the nature of his body is made evident. They are bound together (κρίνω δέ τοί νιν ὥστε συγκόλλως ἔχειν 542), twinned just as Electra was twinned with her brother through the lock and footprints, born from the same source (τὸν αὐτὸν χῶρον ἐκλιπὼν ἐμοί 543) and suckled at the same breast (μαστὸν ἀμφέχασκ' ἐμὸν θρεπτήριον 545). In fact, the snake will quite literally replace Electra within the dramatic action. Orestes' prayer following his exchange with the Chorus (ἀλλ' εὐχομαι γῇ τῇδε καὶ πατὴρς τάφῳ 540), reprises the twinned prayers of Orestes and Electra at the play's start (Ἐρμῇ χθόνιε I, 124), inaugurating a new cycle of iterative staging. The sister who was so central to

⁸⁷ The somatic connection is even more strongly marked in the reading of 534 preserved in M (and printed by Murray) οὔτοι μάταιον· ἀνδρὸς ὄψανον πέλει.

Orestes' arrival in Argos will remain silent from this point on, her role within the play's somatic imagination now filled by the dream-body of Clytemnestra's dream.

Like Electra placing Orestes' hair next to her own, setting her feet into the steps he has vacated, Orestes seeks to inhabit the body of the portentous snake. He wants to reenact the scene played by the dream bodies, casting himself in the role of the serpent.⁸⁸

δεῖ τοί νιν, ὥς ἔθρεψεν ἔκπαγλον τέρας,
θανεῖν βιαίως· ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ' ἐγὼ
κτείνω νιν, ὥς τοῦναιρον ἐννέπει τόδε.

(Ch. 548–50)

*Then she, as she nurtured the terrible portent, must die
violently. I, having become the snake, will kill her, as the
dream says.*

Orestes understands the dream's past action as a script for his own future performance.⁸⁹ The theatrical temporality of recurrence and repetition that has marked the play since the outset is once again set at the center of the action, and, once again, somatic surrogacy is at the heart of the syncopation. Orestes will become the snake (ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς), his body fashioned in accordance with the dream script (ὥς τοῦναιρον ἐννέπει τόδε), adopting a new mimetic body capable of matricide.⁹⁰ Like the dream itself, Orestes' corporeal transformation is difficult to pin down. It too is a semblance but also an embodied act, a scene played out through the uncertain mimetic structures of the stage. It is at once literal and metaphoric, phenomenal and semiotic.

⁸⁸ Roberts 1985: 291.

⁸⁹ Goldhill 1984: 156.

⁹⁰ The use of the dream trope in the unfolding of the matricide is not an Aeschylean innovation. The *topos*, like that of the lock before it, is borrowed from Stesichorus, placing it in a further pattern of repetition. For Stesichorus, corporeal themes were also central to the image, but Stesichorus places the main focus on Orestes' paternity; in his image, Agamemnon is the snake bearing the wound (presumably) of his wife's murderous blows (τᾷ δὲ δράκων ἐδόκησε μολεῖν κᾶρα βεβρωτώμενος ἄκρον fr. 180 Davies/Finglass). Orestes, inheritor of his father's kingdom (βασιλεὺς Πλεισθενίδας) is born from his head a celebratory image of male generation heralding the son's coming vengeance (Garvie 1970: 83–4, Bowie 1993: 172–6, 189–90, Swift 2015: 131–2). Aeschylus transfers Stesichorus' image into the maternal sphere, making Clytemnestra the generative force and emphasizing the corporeal connection between mother and child through the nourishment of her breast.

The nebulousness of the metamorphosis is accentuated by the unusual term by which it is described: ἐκδρακοντωθεῖς. The verb is found nowhere else in extant Greek literature and was almost certainly coined by Aeschylus for this unique purpose. The superficial meaning is evident enough: to be made into a snake.⁹¹ It is the somatic, not the semantic reference of the verb that is extraordinary. How does a human body “become the very snake”? What does such a process entail? What form does a body take once “ensnaked”? We have encountered a number of serpentine surrogates before this one, but none express so succinctly the embodied surrogacy of theatrical reenactment as Orestes' dream doublet.

A semblance that is not idle, a form that is not *not* embodied, not *not* present. The uncertain status of the snake also applies to the body of Orestes on-stage. The relationship between the two bodies is both simpler and more complex than that between Orestes and his previous bodily surrogates. The snake is not an extension or mark of Orestes' own body, like the markers of his body left at the tomb, nor is it an object to be taken up by that body, like Electra's cloak or the traveler's garb of the deception scene. Orestes does not don the costume of a serpent, yet he *becomes* it in a way that goes beyond mere metaphor.⁹²

When the final encounter does play out, not only Orestes but Clytemnestra too fully embodies her role from the dream. The recursive character of the scene, replayed by the two bodies in concert, is not lost on Clytemnestra, who was both audience and actor of its first iteration in the recesses of her chamber. She sees the snake in the man standing before her (οἱ ἄνω, τεκοῦσα τόνδ' ὄφιν ἐθρεψάμην 928). As scholars have long noted, the exchange leading up to the murder places extreme emphasis on the corporeal relationship between mother and son.⁹³ The bodies at stake reembody the somatic semblances of the snake dream.

⁹¹ LSJ offers the definition: “to become a very serpent.” Analogously, though with a more literal sense, Aristophanes employs the verb πτερόω to describe “birdification” at Av. 804, 1334, 1361, 1384, 1446.

⁹² Goldhill 1984: 156.

⁹³ Aeschylus' emphasis on the “physical meaning” of the relationship between mother and son is the focus of the discussion by Segal 1986c: 17–18.

Somatic Semblances

ἐπίσχες, ὦ παῖ, τόνδε δ' αἶδεσαι, τέκνον,
μαστόν, πρὸς ᾧ σὺ πολλὰ δὴ βρίζων ἄμα
οὔλοισιν ἐξήμελξας εὐτραφές γάλα.

(Ch. 896–8)

*Stop, my son, and honor this breast, child, at
which you often slumbered and drew nourishing milk
with your gums.*

Clytemnestra's appeals to her son for mercy, imploring him to honor the intimacy that once drew their bodies together. But, as the nurse Cilissa's speech has made clear, Clytemnestra never cared for the infant Orestes (750–62).⁹⁴ Their corporeal intimacy is the product of the dream performance. The surrogate connection reshapes the relationship of the bodies that now stand face to face. Clytemnestra emphasizes the innocence of Orestes' infant suckling, his soft gums (οὔλοισιν) a stark contrast to the bite of the serpent, drawing blood with its milk. She returns to this same image in her next appeal, recalling once again how she nursed her young son (ἐγὼ σ' ἔθρεψα 908, recalling ὡς ἔθρεψεν ἔκπαγλον τέρας 548). But soon she sees that act in a new light; it was not a child she nursed, but a serpent (τόνδ' ὄφιν ἔθρεψάμην 928) that seemed like a babe. The costuming of the dream, in which she swaddled her serpent like a child (ἐν σπαργάνοισι παιδὸς ὀρμίσαι δίκην 529), is now inverted as Clytemnestra sees beyond the literal costume of the man before her to the snake he has embodied. (The snake that he has always been?) As Orestes and Clytemnestra take up the roles set by the portent, the events of the snake dream are interwoven with the *here* and *now* of the on-stage performance. But the surrogate duplications also reach into the past, as the somatic relationship between mother and nursing son, now long past, is reimaged in new form in light of what those same bodies are doing now, what they have become. Embracing the recursive temporality of theatrical reenactment, the snake dream joins bodies past and future into a mimetic moment – an image and an action – that is capable of traversing and

⁹⁴ See Whallon 1958: 274.

interweaving a multiplicity of *nows* and *thens*, *heres* and *theres*. Clytemnestra's breast is the same and different, offering milk to suckle, the hope of mercy. And so too, Orestes' body is both one and many: child and adult, friend and foe, man and snake.

The visceral power of Clytemnestra's breast – a corporeal reminder not only of the dream text, but of the action of the Iliadic Hecuba⁹⁵ – puts pressure on the embodied nature of the performance playing out on stage.⁹⁶ We, like Orestes, are asked to contemplate Clytemnestra's embodied presence – *this* breast (τόνδε μαστόν) – as the same unseen form that seemed to give suck to the snake of the dream. The reality of his mother's body invokes the somatic link between mother and son but also, as Murnaghan argues, reminds Orestes of his corporeal vulnerability, that he too has a body.⁹⁷ The gesture interrupts the rhythm of Orestes' reenactment and he is momentarily uncertain of how to act. Pylades, speaking the will of Apollo,⁹⁸ must step in to sure up his companion. Orestes' silent doublet throughout the play, Pylades is yet another corporeal foil for Orestes, stepping into the surrogate role played earlier by Electra and the dream snake.⁹⁹ His voice, though it invokes the power of the gods, is also a reminder that Orestes cannot constitute his body alone.

Throughout *Choephoroi*, Aeschylus fashions Orestes' various bodies from the outside. His corporeal forms are delineated by absent presences, material constructs, metaphorical scripts, and unseen siblings. As the bodies fill the stage, they find their shape as semblances within the play's multifaceted relationships of corporeal surrogacy. The somatic drama

⁹⁵ On the allusion, see O'Neill 1998.

⁹⁶ As Taplin 1978: 61 and Wyles 2011: 99 rightly argue, the breast is not made bare on the stage, but the emphasis on Clytemnestra's corporeal presence does not depend on the nudity of her flesh. The complexity of Clytemnestra's gesture recalls the multivalent lion symbolism of the *Agamemnon*. Knox 1952: 23–4.

⁹⁷ Murnaghan 1988: 32.

⁹⁸ Noting the connections between the third-actor roles in each play in the trilogy, Knox 1972: 109 claims that Pylades speaks with "the voice of Apollo himself." Though this will, tellingly, not be apparent until the next play in the trilogy.

⁹⁹ Earlier, Electra had noticed Pylades' footsteps next to those of Orestes (207–8). Cf. Goldhill 1984: 196 who notes the "parallelization of Orestes/Pylades (Electra), Aegisthus/Clytemnestra, the doubling of action, the doubling of doublings."

invites us to rethink the mimetic reality of what we (seem to) see before our eyes. The bodies, both phenomenal and semi-otic, that give life and voice to the figures on the stage cannot be readily distinguished from the surrogates that have crafted them. Nor, more importantly, can these bodies be ascribed the simple status of presence in the *here* and *now*. Their appearance in the theater is an act of iterative duplication. The performing bodies of *Choephoroi*, and the actions they take, are underwritten by other bodies, no longer present, but not fully absent either. Like the voices of embedded speech, they are echoes of something that has already been. Orestes' transformation into a body capable of killing his mother is also an embodied testament to the power of *elsewhere* to inhabit every facet of theatrical performance.

Productive Bodies in Pindar

The somatic imagination of *Choephoroi* is undoubtedly a product of the dramatic stage, of the mimetic costuming and physically deployed stage properties that become “actors,” in Mueller’s formulation, alongside the embodied performers who take them up.¹⁰⁰ But the recursive and surrogate bodies of Aeschylus’ theater find meaningful counterparts, if not literal replicas, in a number of Pindaric compositions. The two that I discuss in this chapter are linked to Aeschylus’ play by overt thematic correspondences. The symbolic and prophetic properties of Aeschylus’ snake at the breast find counterpart in the portentous snakes that appears in the Trojan narrative of O. 8, and the themes of sexual generation and familial reduplication that run throughout Aeschylus’ play are matched by the portrayal of Ixion and his descendants in P. 2. These similarities help to anchor my discussion of Pindar’s texts within the discourse surrounding the bodies of Aeschylus’ *Choephoroi*. But the primary continuities between the two authors emerge not from similarities of images or subject matter, but from a shared concern with the temporal nature of the (performing) body

¹⁰⁰ Mueller 2015.

from which these features arise. In Pindar, as in Aeschylus, the primary mode for corporeal exploration hinges on the same complex harmonies between presence and absence, between *here* and *now* and *there* and *then*, that we have come to recognize from the vocal surrogacies of embedded speech. Like Orestes contemplating his lock, the bodies of Pindar's O. 8 and P. 2 take shape within a discourse of iteration and reenactment. They too are embodied forms that emerge from the syncopated rhythms of theatrical time.

Aiakos' Snake

The themes of embodied performance, repetition, and theatrical temporality explored in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* are in clear evidence in Pindar's treatment of Aiakos' role in the construction of the great wall at Troy in O. 8. The narrative, set within an epinician song for the Aeginetan victor Alcimedon, offers an indication of its syncopated temporality from the start. If the drama of *Choephoroi* began by signaling that the events taking place on stage were reenactments of past events, the temporal disposition of the myth in O. 8 inverts this retrospective gaze, at least initially, looking forward to future actions that have not yet come to pass.

τὸν παῖς ὁ Λατοῦς εὐρυμέδων τε Ποσειδάν,
Ἰλίου μέλλοντες ἐπὶ στέφανον τεῦ-
ξαι, καλέσαντο συνεργόν
τείχεος, ἣν ὅτι νιν πεπρωμένον
ὀρνυμένων πολέμων
πτολιπόρθοις ἐν μάχαις
λάβρον ἀμπνεῦσαι καπνόν.

35

(O. 8.31–6)

[*Aiakos*,] whom the son of Leto and broad-ruling Poseidon,
when they were going to build the battlement in Ilion,
summoned to work with them on the wall, which was fated
in the surge of wars to breathe fierce smoke in
city-sacking battles.

The narrative hinges on the construction of Apollo's and Poseidon's battlement in Troy. Aiakos, who will serve as mortal

assistant to the gods,¹⁰¹ is introduced proleptically. Apollo and Poseidon call upon him as they prepare for the construction (μέλλοντες ... τεῦξαι). The anticipatory perspective of the performing agents is matched by the structure that the three will form. Even before it is built, the wall, a material artifact endowed with breath (ἀμπνεῦσαι), already presages the violence to which it will play host in the future (πεπρωμένον). The wall is possessed of a temporal dimension that will have a profound effect on the bodies which come into contact with it. Like Olympia, the site of Alcimedon's victory which is the home of Zeus' prophets (ἵνα μάντιες ἄνδρες / ἐμπύροις τεκμαιρόμενοι παραπειρῶνται Διὸς ἀργικεράυνου 2–3),¹⁰² the wall is a special location able to reach across time, to construct unconventional temporalities.

The wall's susceptibility to temporal reflection develops further resonance through its connection to a Homeric scene of widespread renown. Pindar's wall, as noted, will be replicated and replaced by a second structure, the construction of which Homer details in *Iliad* 7. Homer recounts Apollo's and Poseidon's ire at the new structure, and Zeus' assurances that the wall will be destroyed at the war's end and erased from human memory.¹⁰³ This seems to be the end of the story, until, quite unexpectedly, Homer returns to the wall at the beginning of book 12, describing its eventual destruction in a vivid digression.¹⁰⁴ The description creates a marked temporal anomaly within the *Iliad* as one of the few places where the narrative explicitly looks beyond the scope of the poem proper to consider what will happen once Priam's city has finally fallen. Already in Homer's text, the wall stands as a material marker of the convergence of past, present, and future, where the construction of objects anticipates actions yet-to-be.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ It has been suggested that the story of Aiaikos' involvement, which is not attested elsewhere before O. 8, is a Pindaric innovation (Carey 1989b), but Burnett 2005: 213 argues that this is unlikely.

¹⁰² The smoking breath of the Trojan wall (λάβρον ἀμπνεῦσαι καπνόν) echoes the fire (ἐμπύροις τεκμαιρόμενοι) through which the Olympian prophets look to the future.

¹⁰³ *Il.* 7.433–66.

¹⁰⁴ *Il.* 12.3–35.

¹⁰⁵ Scodel 1982, Ford 1992: 148–57, Grethlein 2008: 34–5, Porter 2010: 517, Bassi 2014.

Modern scholars have made much of the Iliadic wall's figurative resonances and poetic implications, but the wall was already a subject of great concern among critics of Pindar's time. As James Porter has shown, by the fifth century Homer's wall and its destruction had already come to exemplify the poet's ability to "construct" fictions that could look beyond the limits of material objecthood. The wall, gone from view but preserved in Homer's verse, became what Porter dubs a "temporal *sphragis*," a symbol of the poet's ability to transcend the limitations of mortal time through his poetry.¹⁰⁶

Pindar's wall in O. 8 is undoubtedly influenced by Homer's account and by the fifth-century critical sensitivity to its temporal import. The allusive engagement is marked out by the first sentence of Pindar's narrative. The anticipatory stance of Pindar's Apollo and Poseidon preparing to undertake the wall's construction (μέλλοντες ... τεῦξαι 32) offers a variation on the resonant phrase with which Homer signals the open-ended conclusion of his book 12 digression (ὥς ἄρ' ἔμελλον ὀπίσθε Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων / θησέμεναι *Il.* 12. 34–5). In reworking the *Homeric* scene, Pindar goes back to the first wall of which *Homer's* Achaean construction is a later replica.¹⁰⁷ Like *Homer*, Pindar encodes his wall with the future of its destruction, and also – albeit subtly – reminds us of its replication, in the narrative future (when Agamemnon's men will come to fight at Troy) and the poetic past (when Homer constructed its successor in his verses).

Pindar does not dwell on the details of the wall's construction. His narrative skips directly to the end, when the work has been completed and the newly built edifice becomes a platform – a stage, one might say – for performing bodies. Bodies are conspicuously absent from Homer's materialist account. Even the dead warriors are signaled by the metonymy of their weaponry, shields and helmets dropped in the dust (ᾗθι πολλὰ βοάγρια καὶ τρυφάλειαι / κάππεσον ἐν κόνιῃσι *Il.* 12.22–3). Pindar's

¹⁰⁶ Porter 2011: 32.

¹⁰⁷ This kind of temporal inversion, setting the narrative of the allusive text *before* that of its source, is a common technique in ancient poetics, so e.g. Goldhill 1991: 284.

wall, by contrast, is awash with flesh. The bodies appear as soon as the wall is complete (ἐπεὶ κτίσθη νέον) in the form of three silvery snakes. The snakes try to leap onto the wall. Two fall to their deaths and one survives.

γλαυκοὶ δὲ δράκοντες, ἐπεὶ κτίσθη νέον,
 πύργον ἐσαλλόμενοι τρεῖς, οἱ δύο μὲν κάπετον,
 αὖθι δ' ἄτυζόμενοι ψυχὰς βάλλον,
 εἷς δ' ἐνόρουσε βοάσας.

(O. 8.37–40)

*But, when [the wall] was newly built, silvery snakes tried
 to leap upon the tower; three of them. Two fell to the
 ground and died there in a daze, but the one sprang upon it
 with a war-cry.*

As in *Choephoroi*, where Orestes' questions revolved around the body of the dream snake, Pindar's description emphasizes the somatic and vocal presence of the snakes' performing bodies. The first word, γλαυκοί, signals the unique corporeality that the snakes bring to their performance. The term is familiar enough, but its meaning is difficult to pin down. It signals color – greenish-gray, light blue – but also the appearance of movement, a gleaming or glistening.¹⁰⁸ While it is applied to a range of objects in archaic Greek (most often the sea), the few instances of the term and derivatives in Pindar are almost exclusively applied to snakes,¹⁰⁹ animals that – as we have already seen in P. 12, Dith. 2, and *Choephoroi* – are particularly well suited to exploring the multifaceted qualities of theatrical embodiment. Whatever the source of the snakes' glistening, be it their shimmering scales or some other ineffable kinetic quality in their appearance, the term draws attention to the embodied movement which lies at the heart of their role.¹¹⁰ In contrast to the static wall, which is fixed in place following the

¹⁰⁸ Adorjáni 2014: 199.

¹⁰⁹ O. 6.45, P. 4.249. The exceptions are O. 3.13 γλαυκόχροα κόσμον ἑλίας and the epithet of Athena Γλαυκῶπις (Gentili et al. 2013: 511). Aeschylus does not use the term at all, but instead employs the similarly resonant ποικίλος (as does Pindar at P. 8.46), Sancassano 1996–7. LeVen 2013 discusses the aesthetic resonances of ποικίλος.

¹¹⁰ On Pindar's interest in the kinetic properties of performance, even within materialist images, see Ford 2002: 121–2.

(elided) action of its construction, the movement of the snakes creates a theatrical scene.¹¹¹ Their arrival turns the temporal marker into the site of a drama that unfolds in time.

As Pindar relates the details of the snakes' embodied performance, their actions are imbued with an almost human dimension. Their appearance anticipates the human players for whom, as we shall see, their performance is a prelude. In another link to the Iliadic text which underpins the scene, Pindar draws on the language of Homer's battlefield to underscore the corporality of the creatures' actions, positioning the snakes midway between men and beasts, between his own text and Homer's. The snakes leap up (ἐσαλλόμενοι) onto the wall like Iliadic heroes leaping from their chariots,¹¹² or, more pointedly, like Hector leaping upon the Achaean wall that will replace this one (πύλας καὶ τεῖχος ἐσᾶλτο *Il.* 13.679).¹¹³ The two failed leapers fall (κάπετον), like Homer's warriors,¹¹⁴ and lose their ψυχαί.¹¹⁵ The term ψυχή is rarely found applied to animals in our extant archaic texts and the attribution of the term to the dying snakes is a marked signal that their bodies share something with the countless human counterparts who will lose their lives in the same place in the years to come.¹¹⁶ For the surviving snake, the metaphoric frame intensifies with the expansion of the corporeal picture to include voice. The verb βοάω recalls the formulaic battle cry of the Homeric

¹¹¹ Similar is Aeschylus' approach to the shields of *Seven Against Thebes*, which are incorporated into the active dialogue between Eteocles and the messenger, and their various temporal perspectives on the battle about to take place, rather than acting as static objects.

¹¹² ἐξ ὀχέων σὺν τεύχεσιν ᾄλτο χαμάζε. (11×).

¹¹³ Also *Il.* 12.438: ἐσῆλτο τεῖχος Ἀχαιῶν, 12.466: ἐσᾶλτο πύλας, 13.679: πύλας καὶ τεῖχος ἐσᾶλτο.

¹¹⁴ ἐπὶ γαίῃ / χαμάζε οἱ ἐν κονίῃσι / κάππεσεν (6×). The verb only appears in the aorist in Homer giving a stronger allusive force to Pindar's κάπετον. In Homer, however, the verb is almost always line initial, thus enjambed from the preceding line, and followed by detail of the location of the fall. The sparseness of Pindar's construction, without specification of the place from or to which they fell within the clause, is markedly un-Homeric.

¹¹⁵ Loss of ψυχή as a periphrasis for death (24×). ἀτύζομαι also has strong Homeric provenance.

¹¹⁶ See Heath 2005: 47–9 with bibliography. The same term is used of the snakes killed by Herakles in *N.* 1 (ἀγχομένοις δὲ χρόνος / ψυχὰς ἀπέπνευσεν μελέων ἀφάτων. 46–7).

warrior (βοή).¹¹⁷ Pindar pairs the snake's human-like cry with yet another term associated with heroic physicality in martial epic, ἐνόρουσε, another form of leaping performed on the epic battlefield.¹¹⁸ The snake's vocal expression is bound up with bodily exertion, placing the animal's capacity to produce almost human sound within the framework of his embodied performance.

In this initial description the snakes are cast as embodiments of heroic warriors, serpents engaged in the actions of Iliadic heroes, acting out a drama on a structure that will itself be fashioned anew in Homer's text. But Apollo sees more in the snakes than the reenactment of another poet's battles. Like Orestes contemplating his mother's dream, the god recognizes that the bodies of the snakes are and have surrogates, that their actions are not theirs alone.

ἐννεπε δ' ἀντίον ὀρμαίνων τέρας εὐθύς Ἀπόλλων·

Ἰέργαμος ἀμφὶ τεαῖς,

ἦρωσ, χερὸς ἐργασίαις ἀλίσκεται·

ὥς ἐμοὶ φάσμα λέγει Κρονίδα

πεμφθὲν βαρυγδούπου Διός·

οὐκ ἄτερ παίδων σέθεν, ἀλλ' ὅμα πρώτοις ἄρξεται 45

καὶ τερτάτοις· ὥς ἦρα θεὸς σάφα εἶπαις

(O. 8.41–6)

And pondering the omen before him Apollo spoke straight out "Pergamon is taken around the work of your hands, hero, thus the apparition spoke to me, sent by the son of Kronos, deep-thundering Zeus. Not without your children, but they will be led by the first and the third ones." Thus spoke the god clearly ...

Apollo's prophecy, offered in the vivid present of embedded speech, is a dense web of sonic and corporeal layering that establishes a pattern of surrogacy between the gods and the mortal beasts. The snakes are sent from Zeus (Κρονίδα πεμφθὲν ...), surrogate messengers like Iris who repeats the divine ruler's words

¹¹⁷ βοή δ' ἄσβεστος ὀρώρει (5×); βοήν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης/ Μενέλαον, (39×). Cf. *Il.* 17.89 οὐδ' υἱὸν λάθην Ἀτρεΐος ὀξύ βοήσας. As we have already seen, similar language is used at *Th.* 381.

¹¹⁸ Cf. *Il.* 10.486; 11.149; 11.217; 16.783.

verbatim in the *Iliad*.¹¹⁹ The snakes do not literally deliver the words of the god, as Iris does, but for Apollo, their appearance “speaks” (ὧς ἐμοὶ φάσμα λέγει). This perception of a vocal component within the corporeal performance is only partially explained by the shout of the surviving snake. The “speech” that Apollo discerns comes from the performing bodies of the snakes, made vital and visceral through their symbolic surrogacy. Apollo enters into a kind of vocal harmony with the animals, matching their “speech” with his own, conveyed in embedded speech. The metaphorical dialogue is already hinted at in the opening *inquit* frame, where the standard epic term ἐννεπτε is readily joined with the ensuing adverb ἀντίον, suggesting Apollo’s words are a “response” to the snakes’ embodied expression.¹²⁰

Apollo’s appreciation of the snakes’ vocal powers is tied to his visual perception. It is the appearance (φάσμα) of the snakes that speaks to him. And his interpretation hinges on physical properties that are clearly situated within the somatic sphere. Apollo declares that the wall will be breached where the mortal Aiakos has built it. His words focus on the role of Aiakos’ body, his hands, in constructing the edifice (ἀμφὶ τεαῖς, ἥρωας, χερὸς ἐργασίαις). Just as Electra retained a haptic connection to the weaving she had made for Orestes, there is a tangible link between the hero’s laboring body and the wall that he has helped to construct. The symmetry produces a corresponding sympathy between flesh and stone, rendering the wall weak at the very place where the mortal’s hands have formed it. The detail is both a reflection and confirmation of the snakes’ embodied surrogacy, a commentary on the relationship between the theatrically performing beasts and the bodies of others who will come in contact with the wall. The cadre of three workmen – two divine and one human – is matched in a perfect inversion by the three snakes – two dead and one surviving.¹²¹ The snakes do not faithfully reenact the construction that has already

¹¹⁹ On the prophetic properties of snakes, see Ogden 2013: 17–18, Adorjani 2014: 197–8.

¹²⁰ ἀντίον regularly means “respond” when paired with a verb of speaking, e.g. the Homeric formula [τόν δ’] ἀντίον ηὔδα (72×).

¹²¹ Robbins 1986: 318. On the implications of aligning dead snakes with immortal gods, see Hill 1963.

taken place so much as translate the completed actions of gods and man into the form of their future consequences. The result of their efforts will match the asymmetry of their nature: the immortal hands of the gods creating an impenetrable structure, Aiakos' mortal hands an imperfect one. The wall, too, takes on a new aspect in this light. The fixed, yet impermanent structure is endowed with the corporeal properties of the gods and mortal by whose hands it was fashioned.

The corporeal mirroring between snakes and builders in O. 8 emerges from a retrospective vantage, but the temporal frame of Apollo's prophecy looks forward as well, to the moment that Troy will fall (the moment already foretold by the wall itself). The use of a present tense verb, *ἄλίσκεται* (42), facilitates the blending, placing all of the overlapping and reduplicative actions in a single, shared performative present (the same *here* and *now* of the god's embedded speech). The future, when it does emerge in the course of Apollo's speech, is a continuation of the embodied reenactment represented by the snakes. The god stipulates that the fate performed for Aiakos by the snakes will not be his alone (*οὐκ ἄτερ παίδων σέθεν*). His children and grandchildren will also have a share in the serpentine bodies whose forms foretell his future. Aiakos' progeny, bodies not yet born but woven into the god's prophetic pronouncement, will join in the performance heralded by the *τέρας*. The addendum comes unexpectedly at the start of the new triad, when the formal structure of the ode suggests that Apollo's speech may be at an end. The belated position mirrors the import of this final detail, which, like Homer's book 12 digression on the Achaean wall, carries the narrative well beyond the temporal limits of the mortal bodies previously under consideration.¹²² The snakes' bodies are, we come to understand, also proleptic doublets of Aiakos' descendants, their three generations (two victorious, one not) finding inverted doublets amongst the dead and living bodies of the leaping performers.¹²³

¹²² So Pindar concludes his narrative with a further mirroring of Homer's temporally charged Achaean wall digression.

¹²³ On the notorious *κρυχ καὶ τερτάτοις* (46), see Gildersleeve 1885 *ad loc.*, Hubbard 1987b.

The term *τέρας*, with which Pindar describes the snakes' appearance in his framing *inquit*, is itself a marker of this multiplicity which links the recursive embodiment of O. 8 to a number of other theatrical passages that we have already explored. The word, as generally understood, has two distinct meanings: fearful animal and portent or sign.¹²⁴ The interconnection of these two strands may seem unremarkable; portents often come, as here, in the form of animals. But the connection is also a significant signal of the somatic reality that attended archaic Greek thinking about time. The future takes its form in the bodies of the present. Within the work of Pindar and Aeschylus, the term is imbued with heightened force as a marker of the way that bodies figure and facilitate the recursive temporalities of theatrical expression.

Pindar and Aeschylus employ *τέρας* and its cognates almost exclusively within the discourse of sight and semblances (so here, Apollo describes the same object as a *φάσμα*). Its double resonance as a marker of both bodies and time evokes the way that embodied forms give shape to the recursive temporalities of mimetic performance. Clytemnestra's dream-snake is called a *τέρας* (548), as is Bellerophon's bridle at O. 13.73, gesturing towards the uncertain status of physical forms (dream vision and material tool, respectively) that are simultaneously present and absent, performative semblances that will give shape to surrogate reenactments in the future.¹²⁵ In the context of Apollo's snakes in O. 8, the term describes not just the bodies of the portentous creatures but their actions, the embodied performance of the three leapers. This performative aspect of the term, looking to bodies in and as movement, is reflected in the verbal cognate that is applied to Calchas' prophetic speech in the *Agamemnon* parodos: οὐτῷ δ' εἴπε

¹²⁴ LSJ.

¹²⁵ The other instances of the word in Pindar and Aeschylus evince a similar interest in performance and display, particularly of unusual bodies. Pindar P. 1.26 (the appearance of Typhon's fiery lava), Hymn 33c.4 (the no-longer-wandering island of Delos); *Pae.* 4.39 (the oracle spoken by Euxantius); *Pae.* 8a.24–5 (Hecuba's dream vision); *Pae.* 9.10 (the solar eclipse); Aeschylus *Supp.* 570 (of Io's transformation); *Prom.* 352 (Typhon), 832 (of the prophetic speaking trees at Dodona), 921 (a future challenger to Zeus, a new Typhon).

τερᾶζων (125). The verb, “a very rare word in an emphatic position,” draws attention, as Goldhill observes, “to the mantic nature of the speech to follow,”¹²⁶ but it also, importantly, conveys the correspondence between Calchas’ speech act and the embodied performance (of the eagles and pregnant hare) that it replicates.¹²⁷ The animals’ τέρας finds surrogate expression in the vocal performance of the seer. So too, the leaping snakes of O. 8 will find their somatic articulation replicated in Apollo’s vocal representation.

The snakes stand as surrogates for many bodies at once. Having reenacted the construction of the wall upon its completed “stage,” they will in turn find themselves re-embodied in future generations who will return to Troy and do battle first upon the wall that their ancestor helped to construct and later on the (Homeric) material double that which will succeed it.¹²⁸ These offspring will reenact the τέρας of the warrior-snakes, using their human bodies to perform the serpents’ leaps and cries and deaths anew. Toppling the wall of their forebear, the bodies of Aiakos’ descendants will fulfill, but also repeat, the actions foretold and performed at its construction. Both the static wall and the jumping snakes foretell the same future destruction. Their imbalanced physical properties obscure a deeper symmetry as the animals’ embodied performance kinetically replicates the wall’s prophetic promise. Like Apollo, who translates the snakes’ actions into a vocal performance, the snakes are mirrors and surrogates of the wall on which they leap (dance?). Each predicts and prescribes the same events in the future even as they reperform each other in turn.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Goldhill 1984: 19–20.

¹²⁷ τέρας is associated with vocal powers elsewhere, as at *Pae.* 4.39 τέρας δ’ ἔδον εἰπέν σφι.; *Pae.* 8a.24–5 ἔειπε δὲ μ[...]. “[...] τέρας ὕπνο[λέον]; *Prom.* 832 τέρας τ’ ἄπιστον, αἱ προσήγοροι δρύες. Likewise, the power of the τερασκόπος (*P.* 4.201; *Ag.* 977, 1440; *Ch.* 551; *Eum.* 62) lies in his/her ability to verbally convey import of the portent’s visual symbolism.

¹²⁸ Huxley 1975: 27–8.

¹²⁹ The parallelism between material object and performing body finds echo in Medea’s vocal interpretation of the portentous clod in *P.* 4, on which see above 84–5.

Ixion's Cloud

Corporeal reduplications are at the heart of the Pindaric account of Ixion's sexual transgressions and punishment in P. 2. Like Aeschylus' Orestes, whose body appears prismatically through a variety of lenses in the course of *Choephoroi* (lock, footprint, snake, Phocian garb), Pindar's Ixion is presented through a series of corporeal vignettes, each helping to bring the nature of his decidedly somatic horror into clearer view. Like the wall of O. 8, the craft objects of the poem shape, and are shaped by, the enfleshed bodies with which they interact. The sexual pairings and the offspring that they produce emphasize asymmetry and composite creations, a pattern that recalls the persistent imbalances of embedded speakers in Pindar and Aeschylus. The corporeal doublets are not exact matches. They operate within the theatrical logic of not *not*, each iteration finding an imperfect precedent for newly monstrous bodies and actions.

The mythical narrative begins, as is so common in Greek poetry, at the end. Pindar offers a summary of Ixion's fate, drawing out the themes of iteration and embodied performance that will be the core of the tale as it develops.

θεῶν δ' ἐφετμαῖς Ἰξίονα φαντὶ ταῦτα βροτοῖς
λέγειν ἐν πτερόεντι τροχῷ
παντὶ κυλινδόμενον·
τὸν εὐεργέταν ἀγαναῖς
ἀμοιβαῖς ἐποιομένους τίνεσθαι.

(P. 2.21–4)

*They say that Ixion, rolling across the earth on the
feathered wheel at the orders of the gods, says this to
mortals: readily honor your benefactor with gentle
recompense.*

The vocal facet of Ixion's suffering is a study in repetition. The message, which Ixion is bound to repeat “continuously and forever,”¹³⁰ is itself replicated by Pindar within his own song,

¹³⁰ Morgan 2015: 183, see too Detienne 1994: 89 who notes that Ixion's voice would blend with the whirring sound of the wheel to which he is fixed.

albeit in a shaded *oratio obliqua* (τὸν εὐεργέταν ἀγαναῖς ...).¹³¹ Pindar's paraphrase participates in a pattern of vocal renewal that looks back to the divine voices that script Ixion's speech (θεῶν δ' ἐφετμαῖς) while at the same time echoing the mortal voices (poets?) that have already ventriloquized his message.¹³² Ixion's words are shared property, said for and by men (φαντὶ ταῦτα βροτοῖς λέγειν 21–2) who blend their voices in a message that is common to all (τὰν πολύκοινον ἀνδέξατ' ἀγγελίαν 41). Amongst this group, Ixion is distinguished by the focus on his embodied experience. His reenactment is a corporeal, as well as vocal, undertaking. Bound to the feathered wheel he turns endless circles like a dancer, a somatic expression that will carry his body across the whole of the earth (παντῶ κυλινδόμενον).

The corporeal nature of Ixion's suffering is inextricable from the crime that it punishes. Ixion's carnal desire, his longing for the body of Hera, is the cause of his endless turning across the earth. In Pindar's telling, both punishment and crime are cast as embodied replications, producing twinned surrogate bodies in the deceptive form of the cloud and the “four-limbed restraint” with which he had hoped to seduce the goddess but which becomes the instrument of his torment.

εὐναὶ δὲ παράτροποι ἐς κακότατ' ἄθροαν	35
ἔβαλον· ποτὶ καὶ τὸν ἵκοντ'· ἔπει	
νεφέλα παρελέξατο	
ψεῦδος γλυκὺ μεθέπων αἰδρις ἀνὴρ·	
εἶδος γὰρ ὑπεροχωτάτα πρέπεν Οὐρανιαῖαν	
θυγατέρι Κρόνου· ἄντε δόλον αὐτῷ θέσαν	
Ζηνὸς παλάμαι, καλὸν πῆμα. τὸν δὲ τε-	40
τράκναμον ἔπραξε δεσμόν	
ἐὸν ὄλεθρον ὄγ'· ἐν δ' ἀφύκτοισι γυιοπέδαις	
πεσὼν τὰν πολύκοινον ἀνδέξατ' ἀγγελίαν.	
(P. 2.35–41)	

Unlawful congress throws a man into utter misfortune. And so it was with him, when, ignorant, that man went in pursuit of a

¹³¹ The instruction of the lesson is itself about reciprocity (ἀμοιβαῖς), but Ixion's endless solo performance will find responses only in the form of echoing voices, including Pindar's, that match it in emulative expression.

¹³² So Mackie 2003: 68, Morgan 2015: 183.

sweet lie and lay with a cloud, for its form was conspicuously like the daughter of Cronos, the most distinguished of the Olympians. The hands of Zeus made this trick for him in her place, a beautiful bane. He [sc. Ixion] had made the four-limbed restraint which became his own ruin. And having fallen into the inescapable limb-bonds, he took upon himself the message that is common to all.

Pindar's interest in relationships of embodied surrogacy is most evident in the description of the cloud as a sweet lie constructed as a semblance of Hera's bodily form (ψεῦδος γλυκὺ ... εἶδος ... θυγατέρι Κρόνου). This false copy of the body that Ixion desires is a surrogate that stands in (ἄντε δόλον) for the first.¹³³ The cloud's semblance of a body (or embodied semblance) is already a form of punishment (καλὸν πῆμα).¹³⁴ But Ixion, unaware (ἄϊδρις ἀνὴρ) that his desire will entangle him with the surrogate body of the cloud, will reenact his punishment through a second union of bodies when he joins his limbs to the wheel that will become the stage of his unceasing performance of contrition. Whatever specific form the instrument may have taken,¹³⁵ Pindar's descriptions endow it with explicitly corporeal attributes. In the first account, emphasis is placed on the wings (πτερόεντι τροχῷ 22) that permit the unusual mobility of the device. Now, in the context of Ixion's union with the cloud, Pindar employs two uncommon turns of phrase in quick succession, τετράκναμον ... δεσμόν and ἀφύκτοισι γυιοπέδαις,¹³⁶ each of which imagines the wheel as a

¹³³ On cloud deceptions in archaic and classical Greek poetry, see Park 2017.

¹³⁴ Park 2017: 73. The parallels with Hesiod's Pandora are rightly noted by Bell 1984: 10, Most 1985: 82–3, and Morgan 2015: 186–7.

¹³⁵ On the form of the wheel, see Chamay 1984, Faraone 1993: 1–2, 12–13 with bibliography.

¹³⁶ The term τετράκναμον is found only here and at P. 4.214, also of the *imx*, in extant Greek literature. The image perhaps also recalls the four-horsed chariot (τετραορίας P. 2.4), the means of victory in both odes. Horses, who play a critical role later in the tale are formulaically “four-legged,” a fact redoubled in the four-horsed chariot – a vehicle on which victors compete through surrogates (the trained drivers employed by rich “athletes” such as Hieron). Pindar is not at pains to emphasize the parallels, but they are there nonetheless. The term γυιοπέδη is found elsewhere only at Aesch. *Pr.* 169. As a clear elaboration of the common term πέδη, the compound seems to have been employed with the exclusive purpose of stressing the object's “limbs” (γυῖα).

body with limbs; its own, in the first phrase, and, in the second, those of others which it binds to itself. Intended for the body of Hera, but put to use on Ixion himself,¹³⁷ the wheel reduplicates its own limbs in those of the body fettered to its form.

Both of Ixion's punishments come in the form of a body that works on his own. Both, too, are crafted artifacts, fashioned by Zeus and Ixion respectively (θέσαν Ζηνὸς παλάμαι, ἔπραξε δεσμὸν), intended, like the material tools we have seen elsewhere, to function as conduits of embodied performance. As with the wall of O. 8 and Orestes' tokens in *Choephoroi*, these corporeal instruments facilitate a dense web of somatic correspondences and embodied semblances. But whereas the corporeal reduplications of O. 8 found expression through the wall's function as a stage for replicated actions and the surrogate structures of *Choephoroi* were predicated on the separation of body and material proxy, the somatic rhythms of the Ixion narrative find shape through the fusion of bodies. Both cloud and wheel are tools of somatic surrogacy that work through the joining of embodied performers, whether in sexual congress or corporal constraint. Just as Ixion's voice will blend with others who repeat his repeated warning, the bodies that punish him mirror and merge with his own.

But the somatic artifacts of Ixion's punishment, Zeus' cloud and Ixion's wheel, are not the only embodied doublets of Pindar's narrative. Just as Ixion's vocal performance spawns echoes and imitations, so too does his bodily punishment. The terrible child born of Ixion's union with the cloud (42) and the race of centaurs he subsequently produces (45–8) extend the horror of Ixion's transgression into yet more bodies.¹³⁸ These progeny continue the model of somatic fusion set out in the initial narrative, ensuring that the surrogate structures of Ixion's transgression find expression in unprecedented bodily forms.

¹³⁷ Gantz 1978: 22, somewhat differently, claims that Ixion creates "a human love-charm ... whose object is his own delusion." Faraone 1993: 13 contests the notion that the wheel had magical powers, on which see also the discussion of Ropars 2008.

¹³⁸ Detienne 1994: 87, Brillante 1998.

It is perhaps surprising that the deceptive cloud proves fecund, but the union with Ixion is indeed generative. Immediately following the recapitulation of Ixion's punishment, Pindar recounts how the cloud delivered an offspring whose very body is a record of his father's carnal crimes.

ἀνευ οἱ Χαρίτων τέκεν γόνον ὑπερφίαλον
μόνα καὶ μόνον οὔτ' ἐν ἀν-
δράσι γερασφόρον οὔτ' ἐν θεῶν νόμοις·
τὸν δυνάμζει τράφοισα Κένταυρον, ὃς
ἵπποισι Μαγνητίδεσσιν ἐμείγνυτ' ἐν Παλίου 45
σφυροῖς, ἐκ δ' ἐγένοντο στρατός
θαυμαστός, ἀμφοτέροις
ὁμοῖοι τοκεῦσι, τὰ μα-
τρόθεν μὲν κάτω, τὰ δ' ὕπερθε πατρός.
(P. 2.42–8)

Alone, without the Graces, she gave birth to an arrogant child, solitary, finding honor amongst neither men nor gods. Nursing him, she named him Centaur, and he mated with the Magnesians horses at the foot of Mt. Palios. And from this mating was born an extraordinary throng, resembling both parents, the bottom from the mother and the top from the father.

Ixion's child is unique in his monstrosity, isolated from gods and men, possessed of a body marked by what it lacks and which Pindar declines to describe. Bearing only his name as a mark of his origins, the unspeakable form of Centauros – the penetrated air – is almost impalpable, as evanescent as the cloud who bore him. It is the fact, rather than the shape, of Ixion's offspring that Pindar highlights. The transgressive bodies of the parents have produced a flesh-and-blood memorial – an embodied reenactment – of their union.

Centauros most clearly resembles his parents through what he does with his body, rather than in the form that his body takes. Reenacting the imbalanced coitus of Ixion and the cloud, Centauros mates with the horses of Mt. Pelion. This inherited performance is doubly repetitive, since the plurals and imperfect tense of the description indicate that the act of copulation is performed many times with many of the horses (ἵπποισι Μαγνητίδεσσιν ἐμείγνυτ'), each pairing reprising his

parents' act anew. Like his parents, Centauros too is fertile. His sexual performances produce a new race of bodies; literal composites that fuse their maternal equine forms below with paternal anthropomorphic features above. It is through these offspring that we learn of Centauros' shape, his form mirrored back to him by (the upper half) of the surrogates he has produced. These new bodies recast the transgressions and suffering of Ixion in increasingly literal ways. The corporeal repetitions of ever more hybridized bodies refigure the merging of embodied surrogates. The vignette of Ixion's performative reenactment with which the narrative began is translated into an expansive account of somatic inheritance and generative fecundity.

Like Aiakos in O. 8, whose serpentine surrogates were a match to his descendants as well as himself, Ixion's suffering body produces corporeal doubles that spill down through the generations. The emphasis on corporeal fecundity and somatic reduplication across generations recalls the notion of "performance genealogy" invoked by Joseph Roach in his discussion of circum-atlantic performance. These iterative patterns "draw on the idea of expressive movements as mnemonic reserves, including patterned movements made and remembered by bodies, residual movements retained implicitly in images or words (or in the silences between them), and imaginary movements dreamed in minds."¹³⁹ The mimetic bodies of P. 2 – each a product of the other, and each a reflection on Ixion – are linked not simply by descent but by their genesis as new forms of embodied punishment to match his torment on the wheel. The patterned movements of the progenitor find new expression in the bodies of his offspring.

Generational continuity, a theme introduced at the conclusion of Apollo's prophecy in O. 8 and essential to the snake-child of *Choephoroi*, is here set in relief. The process of bodily reproduction through sexual congress is made to stand as a metaphor for other types of embodied replication. Children are, as Roach observes, paradigmatic embodied surrogates.

¹³⁹ Roach 1996: 26.

Conclusion

The relationship between parents and offspring models a “genealogy of performance” that exposes the processes of doubling and embodied reenactment on which theatrical mimesis is itself founded.¹⁴⁰ Pindar’s portrait of Ixion and his descendants is situated within a nexus of unorthodox generation, deception, and hybridization in which human artifice combines with fecund sexual bodies to produce new forms.

Conclusion

Throughout these meditations on the ways that bodies reproduce themselves, the question of what type of body the performer possesses is never settled. On the one hand, the bodies are insistently flesh; living beings born from others, defined by their corporeal presence and carnal malleability. On the other, the bodies are craft products, fashioned of metal and stone, given shape and voice by unseen hands. The models of corporeal replication and somatic surrogacy that Pindar and Aeschylus develop present a variety of distinct, yet complementary, perspectives on this particularly thorny question. Aeschylus’ exploration of the performing body’s divisible nature through Orestes’ tokens in *Choephoroi* is inverted in Pindar’s emphasis on embodied fusions in P. 2, while the dream that gives rise to Orestes’ “ensnaked” matricide finds its fully embodied counterparts in the leaping snakes of O. 8. The prismatic vision of bodies developed in each of these songs is further multiplied by the variety of perspectives that the poets adopt across their works.

At the same time, the consistent emphasis on generational inheritance, a theme that coincides with the emphasis on genealogical relationships between poets in the critical discourse of their day,¹⁴¹ underpins the deliberately self-reflective nature of these mediations. As their choral compositions find

¹⁴⁰ Roach 1996: 151. In the passage cited, Roach is interested in the way that child performers effect the perception of racial dynamics in Hogarth’s visual depiction of the prison scene in *The Indian Emperour*.

¹⁴¹ The genealogical propensity of ancient literary criticism is well explored by Fairweather 1984, Lefkowitz 1981, Graziosi 2002, and Hägg 2012, see also the contributions to Hanink and Fletcher 2016.

new forms in living flesh, Pindar and Aeschylus reflect on the disparate genealogies that give shape to the bodies of their songs. The syncopated rhythms of voice are mirrored by the recursive structures of corporeal reduplication. Just as the vocal harmonies of embedded speech blur the boundaries of voice, effacing the singular identity of the performer as he becomes a surrogate vessel for a speaker no longer present, so too the very bodies that constitute performance, that give form to the voices in the theater, are rendered multiform. The *theres* and *thens* that find their way into the *here* and *now* of song find correspondence in the reduplicated, unsettled bodies that achieve its reenactment. Like Ixion on the wheel, Pindar and Aeschylus refashion bodies that have come before (their own and those of others) in an ongoing dance of somatic surrogacy.

LOCATING THE REVENANT

PYTHIAN 8, *PERSIANS***The Ghost's Refrain**

Up to this point, this book has emphasized the harmonies that emerge from a comparative reading of Pindar and Aeschylus. In seeking to uncover the connections between these two contemporary poets, we have explored how their choral compositions evince a common theatrical outlook, a disposition that reflects a basic understanding of performance as something characterized by temporal dislocations and patterns of recurrence. In both poets, this theatrical sensibility plays out in similar ways. It is a question of voice, which is mediated and mimetic, and of bodies, which take shape through analogous mechanisms of surrogacy and material mediation. An appreciation of these similarities of approach and outlook begins to carve out a shared space – the indeterminate setting of their imaginary conversation – which tends to be excluded from contemporary scholarly interpretations of their work. At the same time, the accentuation of commonalities is not, and should not be understood as, a denial of difference. Any map of Pindar's and Aeschylus' poetic affinities must be sure not to erase or ignore the features that distinguish the work of these two poets. Thus, having established a basic understanding of their theatrical correspondences, it is to the question of difference that we now turn.

There are, of course, many ways to describe Pindar's and Aeschylus' dissimilarities. Some bear on content: the types of stories told or the types of speakers who find voice in their work. Some are formal: the length of composition, for example, or metrical structure. These facets are undeniably

important to our understanding of these two poets, but they are, I believe, peripheral to the theatrical disposition that I have traced through the preceding chapters of this book; they fill out and embellish, rather than constitute, the complex temporalities and recursive patterns of voice and body that this book has sought to explore. Practicalities of performance – of exclusively choral as opposed to “mixed” performance, or of costuming and other material facets – represent similarly tangential features of this picture. Even if we could speak with certainty about the historical conditions of choral production,¹ these attributes, important though they are, are not primary concerns within the framework of Pindar’s and Aeschylus’ imaginary conversation.² The historical tools of performance are of far less concern than the figurative instruments through which the poets model their appreciation for the prismatic character of theatrical reenactment.

The aim of this chapter is to examine the ways in which the models of theatricality differ in the work of Pindar and Aeschylus, to add nuance to the picture that we have developed so far by teasing out distinct threads within the largely cohesive fabric of their approach to voice and body in performance. To anticipate somewhat the argument I will set out in detail, I locate these distinctions within the divergent form that the *here* and *now* takes in the works of these two poets. Both poets, as we have seen, predicate the present and presence of performance on a multiplicity of *elsewheres* that make their way into the mimetic worlds of their songs. Other voices and bodies, other places and times reverberate across, echo, and prefigure the spectacle set before the audience. This deep structure, what Roach has called the “performance genealogy,”³ imbues the performing surrogates of the *here* and *now* with

¹ I discuss the limitations of our evidence for early fifth-century choral performance at 9–12 and 162–3.

² This claim is, quite emphatically, made only with regards to the present study. The extremely circumscribed nature of this view of the material conditions of performance will, I hope, be evident from my deep interest in questions of costuming and stage properties elsewhere: Uhlig 2018a, Uhlig forthcoming-b.

³ Roach 1996: 26, already discussed, 216–17.

the force of unseen layers of *there* and *then*. But the mimetic spaces which these absent elements and elements of absence make possible – the voices upon which other voices are layered, the bodies through which other bodies take form – differ in ways that unsettle, without entirely disrupting, the continuity between Pindar's (lyric) theatricality and that of his (dramatic) contemporary, Aeschylus.

This divergence in the performative presence of our two poets finds clearest expression in Pindar's and Aeschylus' portrayal of ghosts within their songs. My approach to this subject is informed by features internal to the work of Pindar and Aeschylus, but it also draws on theoretical developments in contemporary performance studies which it will be helpful to detail briefly before turning once again to the ancient world. In recent years, many scholars of modern and post-modern performance have identified ghosts – spectral presences whose return to the world of the living is in-and-of-itself a kind of performance – as a particularly potent paradigm for thinking about the recursive and temporally disjointed qualities of performance that I have been interested to trace in the work of Pindar and Aeschylus.⁴ Ghosts reflect, and also reveal, something essential and unique about contemporary performance, but these theatrical revenants from the modern stage also help to sharpen our understanding of the very different world of performance in which Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs take shape.

Scholarship on ghosts in contemporary performance covers a wide array of phenomena, but the studies that I am concerned with here are all connected by a shared interest in the dynamics of embodied return and repetition.⁵ On the more concrete end

⁴ Especially important is the work of Roach 1996, Carlson 2001, Rayner 2006. See also Blau 1982: 150–2, Malkin 1999, Fuchs and Chaudhuri 2002, Pizzato 2006, Luckhurst and Morin 2014. The recent off-Broadway production *Ghost Light* consciously applies this theoretical bent to an immersive performance piece that, in the words of Ben Brantley, finds “a hypnotic circularity in a craft that is, after all, about recreating the same images and words night after night after night.” *New York Times* “Review: Specters of the Stage Enchant in ‘Ghost Light’” June 19, 2017.

⁵ Related to, but distinct from my concerns here are the broader interests of “Hauntology” or “Spectrality Studies” which arose in the wake of Derrida's *Specters of Marx*, on which see del Pilar Blanco and Peeren 2013.

of the spectrum, Marvin Carlson explores the *realia* of performance in his influential book *The Haunted Stage*, which looks at how the quite literal reuse of material – actors’ bodies, costumes and stage properties, theater spaces – results in a “haunted” experience for theatergoers.⁶ Well-known actors, such as John Barrymore or Laurence Olivier, bring with them the embodied memory of past roles. Famous productions, like John Gielgud’s *Hamlet* with Richard Burton, leave their mark on texts even as plays continue to be staged with new casts and in new forms. Indeed, for Carlson, the very fact that the same theater plays host to actors, and audience, night after night endows the space with the ghostly feel of all the absent spirits of past performances.⁷ Carlson’s work on the material realities of theatrical “hauntings” has particularly pointed implications for thinking about ancient performance. The haunting effects of *realia* identified by Carlson were already at play in fifth-century Greece in the form of masks, costumes, and stage-sets reused from play to play.⁸ Scholars of choral lyric have long wondered about whether a chorus might simply repeat a performance at its conclusion, or as a memorial at some later date.⁹ The ghostly returns of actors and chorus members, who appeared in multiple roles over the course of years, or even a single day, has long been recognized as a particularly prominent feature of the ancient theater.¹⁰ As Mark Ringer and others have explored, the return of the same actor in a new role – “Odysseus” reappearing as “the merchant” in Sophocles *Philoctetes*, for instance – can imbue a dramatic performance with additional meaning.¹¹ The same effect would undoubtedly be felt over the course of a trilogy or tetralogy, if (as is generally assumed) the cast remained unchanged.¹² The slow emergence of the Erinyes across the *Oresteia*, to take an example

⁶ Carlson 2001: esp. 1–15.

⁷ Carlson 2001: 131–64.

⁸ Duncan 2018.

⁹ On immediate repetition, see Ford 2011: 104. On belated reperformance with (some of) the same participants, see Morrison 2007 and, quite differently, Currie 2017.

¹⁰ Easterling 2002, Csapo 2010.

¹¹ Ringer 1998, Marshall 1994, Rehm 2002: 168–214.

¹² Knox 1972, Marshall 2003.

that is close to hand, takes on new import if one considers that the phenomenal bodies of the fearsome Chorus of *Eumenides* are the same as those of the Argive elders of *Agamemnon* and captive women of *Choephoroi* (not to mention the randy satyrs of the *Proteus*).

While such literal recursions represent an important facet of the spectral quality that Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs would have achieved in historical performance, the poets' critical reflection on the theatricality of their compositions is more closely aligned with the more abstract, theoretical work that has been pursued by scholars such as Joseph Roach and Alice Rayner. In his influential work *Cities of the Dead*, Roach has argued that the power and presence of ghostly spirits represents a critical feature of "the three-sided relationship of memory, performance, and substitution."¹³ Examining the various interconnected performance cultures that developed around, and in response to, the transatlantic slave-trade, Roach shows how the painful absences within communities, particularly communities affected by the instability and violence of slavery, find new form in performance through relationships of "surrogation" which allow the living to retain (and reimagine, redefine, revisit) their possession of the dead. In a somewhat different vein, Rayner views the ghost as a metaphor that invites us to think about performing bodies and theatrical presence beyond the binaries of present/absent, here/there, now/then.¹⁴ Such a "spectral" model of theatrical performance, she argues, allows us to reimagine mimesis outside of the traditional (Platonic) opposition of reality and imitation.

The model of ghostly surrogacy put forth by Roach and the ontological uncertainties explored by Rayner fit well with the critical approaches of fifth-century Greek poets, who, shortly after Pindar's and Aeschylus' deaths, would begin to regularly engage in interpretive commentary by summoning poets themselves to the comic stage in the form of ghosts.¹⁵ Like the

¹³ Roach 1996: 2.

¹⁴ See also Malkin 1999, Fuchs and Chaudhuri 2002, Pizzato 2006, Luckhurst and Morin 2014.

¹⁵ Hanink and Uhlig 2016, Bassi 2016: 144–73.

embodied revenants of the comic imagination, the ghosts of Pindar's and Aeschylus' compositions are mimetic semblances. They *seem* to appear – are conjured into being – yet are not really here. Their substance is uncertain, as is their presence. Even as they join us, they remain somehow other, simultaneously participating in the *here* and *now* and the *then* and *there*. Ghosts are, as Rayner asserts, the quintessential expression of the theatrical not *not*.¹⁶

The revenants who claim voice and presence in the songs of Pindar and Aeschylus do not represent some distinctive, unique property of mimetic recurrence that conflicts with the models of reenactment found elsewhere in their works. All of the structures that we have examined in this book are, in a certain sense, ghost stories. The “ghosts” that take shape in their songs are simply paradigms of this broader discourse. The poets' narratives of specters brought back from the dead are exaggerated, self-referential instantiations of the underlying definition of mimetic performance as the act of *bringing something back*. The overt theatricality of ghosts, as figures who invite us to interrogate the circumstances of mimetic reenactment, enables a certain paradoxical transparency regarding the fundamental confusions – of time and space, of voice and body – that govern the poetry of Pindar and Aeschylus. Ghosts shine a light on the twinned constructs of presence and present. They permit us to examine with an unusually keen sensitivity the conditions of theatrical performance under which voices and bodies return from elsewhere to the *here* and *now*. Viewed in this a way, these performing revenants take shape under the logic of what Albert Henrichs has called choral projection.¹⁷ They are performing presences that direct us to corresponding absences, things *here* and *now* that take shape only in light of other iterations of themselves in the *there* and *then*. Precisely because Pindar and Aeschylus are so eager to situate ghostly presences within the broader continuum of theatrical song with relatively little obtrusion, these figures, embedded as they

¹⁶ Rayner 2006: xvii–xxi, see also Katuszewski 2011.

¹⁷ Henrichs 1996.

are in our own contemporary discourse about performance, afford fertile reflection on the shape of Pindar's and Aeschylus' theatrical compositions.

The link that Pindar and Aeschylus draw between ghosts and mimetic reenactment is motivated by the specters' recursive nature (revenants, like bodies and voices of performance, always appear *again*), but it also clearly stems from the fifth-century propensity to identify ghosts in the terminology of performance and artisan craft. The most common terms for ghost in Pindar and Aeschylus' time were φάσμα and εἶδωλον,¹⁸ words which cast the other-worldly spirits as semblances and reduplications; things – bodies and voices – made to appear like something else. The idea that ghosts are likenesses is already evident in the Homeric description of Patroclus' spectral return: πάντ' αὐτῷ μέγεθός τε καὶ ὄμματα κάλ' ἐῖκυϊα, / καὶ φωνήν, καὶ τοῖα περὶ χροῖ εἴματα ἔστο· *He was like him in every respect, in size and beautiful eyes and voice, and wore the same clothes upon his skin* (23.66–7).¹⁹ For Homer, ghosts are replicas, resembling their earlier selves in body and voice. But the fifth-century terminology suggests that these likenesses are craft objects, artisanal products like sculptures or paintings to which the term εἶδωλον, and the similarly resonant εἶκων, were also applied.²⁰ As we will see, Pindar and Aeschylus avoid this evocative terminology when they describe ghosts *stricto sensu*,²¹ but they draw on this spectral vocabulary in many of the theatrically charged passages we have already encountered. Apollo declares the appearance of the three snakes in O. 8 a φάσμα.²² Calchas, speaking through the *Agamemnon* Chorus, applies

¹⁸ The latter is readily attested in Homer (*Il.* 23.72, 104; *Od.* 11.83, 213, 476, 602, 24.14), the former seems to have come into use only in the fifth century.

¹⁹ Bardel 2000: 144–5, Aguirre 2009: 182. On ghosts in Homer, see Johnston 1999: 7–16, Heath 2005, Aguirre 2009: 179–83.

²⁰ Hdt. 1.51.23, 6.58.20. Steiner 2001: 3–18 explores how statues function as markers of absence.

²¹ One exception is found in a fragmentary threnos of Pindar where the non-corporeal form of the dead is identified as an εἶδωλον: fr. 131b.1–4 σῶμα μὲν πάντων ἔπεται θανάτῳ περισθενεῖ, / ζῶν δ' ἔτι λείπεται αἰῶνος εἶδω- / λον· τὸ γὰρ ἔστι μόνον / ἐκ θεῶν.

²² O. 8.43 ὧς ἐμοὶ φάσμα λέγει. See 206–10 for fuller discussion of the passage.

the same term to the hare and eagle portent at Aulis,²³ and the prophets, whose speech is embedded in the first stasimon of the same play, use the term to describe Helen's lingering presence in the house of Atreus.²⁴ Later, Agamemnon himself speaks of men's capacity for duplicitous speech, calling those who feign goodwill "a mirror of fellowship and an image of a shade" (ὁμιλίας κάτοπτρον, εἶδωλον σκιᾶς 839). Pindar deploys the language of spectral semblances in P. 2, describing the false cloud-Hera that Zeus crafts for Ixion as an εἶδος, a cognate of εἶδωλον.²⁵ These apparitions are not ghosts in the traditional sense, but they possess the qualities of theatrical performance – multiple resonances, uncertain ontological status, incongruity between what they *seem* to be and what they *are* – that are the hallmarks of phantoms.

Given the pointed use of the terminology of spectral semblances in non-ghostly contexts, it is noteworthy that when "actual" ghosts are at issue Pindar and Aeschylus do not distinguish revenants by the use of specific terms. But while they eschew the terminology that is so apt for these prodigiously theatrical figures, we find ghosts described in language and circumstances that align revenants from the land of the dead with the poets' other theatrical creations. Thus, for example, in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* Clytemnestra, returned from the underworld in hopes of vengeance, says that she appears in a dream (ὄναρ γὰρ ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμῆστρα καλῶ 116), drawing an unmistakable parallel to the snake-at-the-breast that appeared to her in a dream in the previous play.²⁶ Notable too is the fact

²³ *Ag.* 145 δεξιὰ μὲν κατάμομφα δὲ φάσματα. See 67–76 for fuller discussion of the passage. Not long after, the Chorus apply the same term to the beacons in which Clytemnestra puts her trust: πότερα δ' ὀνείρων φάσματ' εὐπειθῇ σέβεις; 274.

²⁴ *Ag.* 415 φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀνάσσειν. On this embedded speech, see above 46–9.

²⁵ P. 2.37–9 ψευδὸς γλυκὺ μεθέπων αἰδρις ἀνὴρ / εἶδος γὰρ ὑπεροχωτάτα πρέπεν Οὐρανιαῖν / θυγατέρι Κρόνου. See 212–14 for fuller discussion of the passage. Elsewhere Pindar uses the term to contrast appearance and action or (true) nature: O. 8.19, P. 4.264, P. 9.108. Likewise, Aeschylus at *Th.* 507–8 (οὐτ' εἶδος οὔτε θυμὸν οὐδ' ὅπλων σχέσιν / μωμητός). At *Pr.* 567, Io speaks of the εἶδωλον Ἄργου γηγενοῦς with his countless eyes.

²⁶ The exact nature of Clytemnestra's "dream state" is unclear. The noun ὄναρ can function either as nominative subject of πρέπεν or adverbially (on the latter, Sommerstein 1989: 105). It is notable that she claims to speak for/about "her soul" (ἔλεξα τῆς ἐμῆς πέρι / ψυχῆς 114–15) immediately before identifying herself as a dream

that ghosts in Pindar and Aeschylus are most often ancestors, whose link to the world above is borne out in the bodies of those still living.²⁷ The conspicuous normalizing of revenants warns against treating these figures as exceptional, despite their seemingly anomalous status. Ghosts find ready fellowship amongst the many other theatrical semblances and recurrences that fill Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs. Whether they are conjuring actual ghosts or simply ghostly presences, Pindar and Aeschylus fashion performances of revenants.

The particular geography of the dead is a critical feature of the theatrical presence of ghosts in the work of Pindar and Aeschylus. The ability of ghosts, who simultaneously inhabit the world of the dead and the living, to retain connections to what is other and elsewhere, underpins their status as conduit to the past, but also to a different configuration of the present.²⁸ When Pindar expresses the wish, common throughout the epinicians, that his song be heard by the dead, it is only the location of these men that marks out their status.²⁹ He draws attention to the spatial duality of spectral figures in P. 5 when he speaks of Battus as dead and separate (δίχ' α κεῖται θανόν) and as still inhabiting the agora of the city he founded (93). Later in the same song, Pindar locates the other holy kings of Cyrene's past in a space that is at once apart, but before their

vision. Her dream apparition also recalls that of Patroclus, who appears to Achilles in a dream in *Iliad* 23. Like Athena in O. 13, Clytemnestra invokes the passage when she addresses the Furies in language reminiscent of the Homeric hero's (εὐδοίτ' ἄν, Ch. 93 ~ εὐδεις, Il. 23.69; see above 116–17).

²⁷ In Aeschylus, Orestes and Electra call on their dead father Agamemnon in *Choephoroi*, Clytemnestra appears to her son Orestes in *Eumenides*, Darius responds, indirectly, to his son Xerxes in *Persians*. In Pindar, the language marks the continuity of generations in the face of mortality: O. 8.70–2 πατρί δὲ πατρός ἐνέπνευσεν μένος / γήραος ἀντίπαλον· O. 880 συγγόνων; O. 14.21 πατρί κλυτὰν φέροισ' ἄγγελίαν, Κλεόδομον ὄφρ' ἰδοῖσ', υἱὸν εἴπησ' ὅτι κτλ.

²⁸ Patroclus' ghost in *Iliad* 23 seems to be a model here. Unable to join the world of the dead, because unburied, he returns to the world of the living, and in so doing recalls his many past conversations with Achilles. But unlike the ghosts of Pindar and Aeschylus, Homer's Patroclus returns only to sever his ties to the living once and for all (23.75–9) and expresses the wish to live together with Achilles in death as they once lived in life (23.83–5).

²⁹ O. 14.2–24, O. 8. 72–84, P. 5.94–103, N. 4.86, I. 6.62–6 and, somewhat similarly, N. 8.44. On Pindar's singing for the dead as an essential facet of "poetic immortality," see Segal 1985 and Phillips 2016: 220–8, with specific reference to O. 14.

Locating the Revenant

houses (ἄτερθε δὲ πρὸ δωμαίων ἕτεροι λαχόντες Ἄϊδαν / βασιλέες ἱεροὶ / ἐντί· P. 5.96–8).³⁰ The paradox is set out in even clearer terms at the conclusion of O. 8.

ἔστι δὲ καὶ τι θανόντεσσιν μέρος
κάν νόμον ἐρδομένων·
κατακρύπτει δ' οὐ κόνις
συγγόνων κεδνὰν χάριν.

(O. 8.77–80)

*A portion belongs to the dead even in the undertakings
of the living. Dust does not hide the cherished grace
of kin.*

Although the dead are buried, they retain a part in the world of the living. The assertion offers a variation on a commonplace of archaic Greek poetry, that the dead live on through the memory (and songs) of the living. But Pindar's denial of the finality of burial, paired with his insistence that the spirits of the dead retain their place amongst the living, gives a pointedly spatial dimension to the familiar conceit.³¹ Ghosts, as envisioned here, remain part of the world above even as they have departed to elsewhere.

The shared space of dead and living provides a conduit through which voices can be carried into the underworld. Pindar invokes Echo (O. 14.21) and a personified Message (O. 8.82) to bear his song to the dead. In *Choephoroi*, Aeschylus' Orestes and Electra stand with the Chorus beside Agamemnon's tomb and send their laments down to where he is, below the earth (φίλος φίλοισι τοῖς ἐκεῖ καλῶς θανοῦσιν, κατὰ χθονὸς ἐμπρέπων σεμνότιμος ἀνάκτωρ 354–6). But the spirits of the dead also make the journey back up to the sites of contact between worlds. It is the spatial dynamics created by this

³⁰ See the discussion of Segal 1985: 206–8. By contrast, Gentili and Bernardini 1995: 521 see only a metaphor for sacrifice to the dead.

³¹ O. 2, Pindar's most detailed depiction of the afterlife, is perhaps not representative of the views held by the poet elsewhere (Lloyd-Jones 1990: 89, Robbins 1997: 259). Nevertheless, geographic details are central to his depiction of "the road that leads to the tower of Cronus, where Ocean breezes surround the island of the blessed" (Διὸς ὁδὸν παρὰ Κρόνου τύρσιν· ἔνθα μακάρων νᾶσον ὠκεανίδες αὔραι περιπνέουσιν 70–2). On possible suggestions of actual immortality, through hero cult, in Pindar, see Currie 2005.

latter circumstance that will concern us here, when the dead return and once again inhabit the spaces to which they can still lay claim. The locations to which the dead return are disparate: tombs, but also cities and temples. Some sites, like the lakeside setting of Aeschylus' *Psychagogoi*, are distinguished by their connection with the world below,³² while the reason for selecting others, such as the city of Thebes (Pindar P. 8) or Apollo's temple at Delphi (Aeschylus' *Eumenides*), is less readily apparent. But whatever the particular characteristics of the location, ghostly apparitions are always a matter of place, of a *here* to which the spirits return from *there*.³³ The question of place is not only critical to the spectral apparitions of Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs, but constitutes the most significant way in which their approach to theatrical reenactment diverges.

Both Pindar and Aeschylus adopt ghosts as emblems of theatrical performance. The revenants themselves do not exhibit significant differences in the works of these two poets, but the insistently unstable presence (and present) of ghosts enables a clearer delineation of the theatrical spaces into which they are conjured. While the *theres* from which the spirits return to claim a second voice are not substantively distinct, the *heres* to which these revenants return take markedly different shapes. Where Pindar conjures his ghosts into a mimetic world characterized by a spatial and temporal instability analogous to that of the revenants themselves, Aeschylus situates these bodies of uncertain status within a clearly demarcated geographic frame. The destabilizing effects of a spectral apparition are felt in both, and in both the result is a heightened awareness of the virtuosic craftsmanship of a world in song – a mimetic reality that is at once delicate and robust, tenuous and limitless, present and absent, not and not *not*. It is not the end result that differs, but the features by which we are made aware of it.

³² Bardel 2005: 88, Mikellidou 2016: 335–6, Macias Otero 2015: 141–2.

³³ Rehm 2002: 76.

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Nowhere does Pindar explore the complex relationship between ghosts and places more emphatically than in P. 8, an ode of celebration for an Aeginetan victor that conjures two revenants beside the walls of Thebes. The temporal dynamics of these hauntings produce a vertiginous effect. Blending pasts and presents in seamless, unspoken paradoxes, the twinned ghostly narratives defy any sense of chronological certainty. Although Pindar describes the geography of ghostly return in relatively simple and straightforward language, the spectral encounters of the song, first with the Argive seer Amphiaraus and then with his son Alcmaeon, refuse attachment to a definitive *here* and *now*. The ghosts return to the present of Pindar's song, but they do not confer spatial *presence* to a song which, as Richard Martin has explored, is throughout characterized by movement and dislocation.³⁴ Despite the vivid theatricality of Pindar's ghostly companions, the traveling bodies and migrating voices of P. 8 resist, until and perhaps even through the very culmination of the performance, any enduring sense of just where *here* may be.

The complex theatrical temporality at the heart of P. 8 is apparent from the moment that the poet first introduces the specter of Amphiaraus, the prophet of the Argive expedition against Thebes who bore his unmarked shield into battle in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*.³⁵ Pindar identifies the seer as a voice from the past suited to his current aim of praising the victorious exploits of his Aeginetan *laudandus*, Aristomenes. Just as he did in O. 6 when quoting Adrastus' words of praise for the dead Amphiaraus – a scene taken from the same Theban cycle – the poet makes the double applicability of the seer's speech explicit.

αὔρων δὲ πάτραν Μειδυλιδᾶν λόγον φέρεις,
τὸν ὄνπερ ποτ' Ὀικλέος παῖς ἐν ἑπταπύλοις ἰδὼν
υἱοῦς Θήβαις αἰνίξατο παρμένοντας αἰχμᾶ,

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³⁴ Martin 2004: 350–9.

³⁵ I discuss Amphiaraus' shield in *Seven Against Thebes* at 148–55.

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ὁπότε' ἀπ' Ἀργεος ἦλυθον
δευτέραν ὁδὸν Ἐπίγονοι.

(P. 8.38–42)

Increasing the Meidylid line, you bear the speech which the son of Oikles once riddled as he looked upon the sons standing by their spears in seven-gated Thebes, at that time when the Epigonoι traveled the way from Argos a second time.

Amphiaraus' riddling speech serves as the pivot between two places and times, joining Pindar and his *laudandus*, addressed in the second-person, with a performance from *elsewhere* (λόγον φέρεις, τὸν ὄνπερ ποτ').³⁶ The *now* of encomiastic song and the *then* of Amphiaraus' (vocal) appearance are intertwined as Amphiaraus' voice is brought back to life through the power of embedded speech. The marked deployment of this poetic device in order to bring the past into the present, to reenact a performance already undertaken, will, by now, be a familiar *topos* of the recursive syncopation of theatrical poetics. The place and time of Amphiaraus' speech are clearly demarcated. His words, now conjured into presence in Pindar's song, were spoken as the seer witnessed the Epigonoι prepare for battle beside the gates of Thebes. The sons (υἱούς) on whom Amphiaraus' speech and vision (ιδών) are trained represent a second generation, a detail which introduces a further layer of reduplication to Pindar's embedded reperformance. Taking up arms against the city that their fathers had died trying to sack, the Epigonoι – literally, the ones “born *after*” – are engaged in a duplicate performance of their fathers' failed exploits.³⁷ Their expedition against Thebes, for which Amphiaraus serves as witness and exegete, takes the born-afters on a second road (δευτέραν ὁδόν), retracing a path already crossed, reenacting a war already fought in hopes of a different outcome.³⁸

³⁶ The pivot follows Pindar's standard usage of a relative pronoun combined with an aorist verb (as outlined by Bonifazi 2004b), but in place of the customary geographic/character designation, the reference is to Amphiaraus' *logos* (cf. O. 6.12, P. 4.9–10 discussed at 43–6 and 80–5, respectively).

³⁷ Maslov 2015: 3 observes that through the narration of “an event known to be an *iteration* of an earlier mythical episode, Pindar implicitly comments on the nature of poetic tradition.”

³⁸ As Foster 2017: 163 notes “it is only when Pindar reveals that the men arriving from Argos came ‘on a second road’ as ‘the Epigonoι’ ... that we must double back and

But what Pindar leaves unspoken in this introduction to Amphiarus' speech is just as critical to understanding the theatrical disposition of the inset narrative. According to most traditions, Amphiarus was either killed or swallowed under the earth at the time of the first Argive attack on Thebes.³⁹ In either case, unlike Adrastus, he does not survive to participate in the expedition of the Epigonoι. Pindar is undoubtedly aware of this tradition, indeed he recounts the event in N. 9, opting for the latter variant,⁴⁰ and it surely informs the narrative of P. 8.⁴¹ Nonetheless, not only does Pindar make no allusion to either tradition in P. 8, he never explicitly identifies Amphiarus – the speaker whose voice he brings to vivid life through embedded speech – as a ghost. The silence surrounding this central narrative detail marks its signal importance. We are not told – and yet cannot but know – that Amphiarus' speech at Thebes was performed by a voice and body no longer fully amongst the living, even before Pindar conjured it through the vocal reenactment of his song. The critical omission facilitates an uneasy sense of equivalence amongst the returning Argive heroes, a blurring of boundaries between dead and living on which Pindar will capitalize as he delves further into his song's recursive mimesis.

It is to his own son Alcmaeon, a duplicate fighter on the belated expedition of the born-afters, that Amphiarus' first directs his prophetic utterance. The speech, although ostensibly reprised within Pindar's epinician ode for its laudatory content,⁴² is suffused with the themes of replication,

re-envision the scene as one belonging to the Epigonoι and not to the Seven." The phrase δευτέρων ὁδόν also has clear metapoetic resonance, given the common figure of the "path of song" (Becker 1937, Ford 1992: 41–8) and is likely a sign of Pindar's reliance on Theban epic in the crafting of this scene. The connection between the Pindaric and Aeschylean treatments and their relation to an epic predecessor is explored by Nagy 2000. On the role of Amphiarus in the epic cycle, see Johnston 2008: 113.

³⁹ For discussion, see Pfeijffer 1999: 535–6, Gentili and Bernardini 1995: 573–4.

⁴⁰ N. 9.24–7, also N. 10.8–9.

⁴¹ Van 't Wout 2006 argues that Amphiarus is in fact offering his prophecy at the time of the first Argive attack, but lines 38–42 strike me as unequivocal that the setting is the second expedition undertaken by the Epigonoι (so Foster 2017: 163, see above n. 38).

⁴² On the laudatory content, see Pfeijffer 1999: 437–9. Athanassaki 1990: 103–4 discusses the narratological utility of this prophecy.

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surrogacy, and mediated performance – at once an affirmation and a symptom of the theatrical syncopation inherent in the Epigonoι’s recursive reenactment.

ὦδ' εἶπε μαρναμένων·
“φυῶ τὸ γενναῖον ἐπιπρέπει
ἐκ πατέρων παισὶ λῆμα. θαέομαι σαφές
δράκοντα ποικίλον αἰθᾶς Ἀλκμᾶν' ἐπ' ἀσπίδος
νωμῶντα πρῶτον ἐν Κάδμου πύλαις.
ὁ δὲ καμὼν προτέρᾳ πάθῃ
νῦν ἀρείονος ἐνέχεται
ῥοιχὸς ἀγγελίᾳ
Ἄδραστος ἥρω· τὸ δὲ οἴκοθεν
ἀντία πράξει. μόνος γὰρ ἐκ Δαναῶν στρατοῦ
θανόντος ὅστέα λέξαις υἱοῦ, τύχᾳ θεῶν
ἄφιξεται λαῶ σὺν ἀβλαβεῖ
Ἄβαντος εὐρυχόρους ἀγυιάς.” τοιαῦτα μὲν
ἐφθέγγατ' Ἀμφιάρεος.

(P. 8.43–56)

Thus he spoke of the warring men: “the noble character of fathers shines forth in the nature of their sons. I see clearly the variegated serpent on the shining shield that Alcmaeon wields first before the gates of Cadmos. And the hero Adrastus who labored in the earlier struggle now meets with the message of a better bird. But at home, he will enact the opposite. For alone of the host of Danaans he will gather the bones of his son, by the caprice of the gods he will come to the broad dancing lanes of Abas with his men unharmed.” Such things did Amphiaras speak.

The embedded speech is rife with features that we have encountered in previous chapters. In addition to the form of the embedded quotation – a prophetic speech, meeting with no embedded response but explicitly aligned to the voice of the framing speaker – the shield and snake on which Amphiaras comments and the emphasis on generational continuity are all iterations of figures used to explore the complexities of theatrical performance elsewhere.⁴³ Like the messenger and Eteocles

⁴³ It is not, I think, entirely coincidental that P. 8 is the latest of Pindar’s dateable works, generally accepted to have been composed in 446 BCE. Nevertheless, it is difficult to conclusively demonstrate that direct allusion is at work here, whether to

of Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, Amphiaraus conjures past, present, and future through examination of his son's shield. The crafted doublet wrought on the tool reveals the spirit (λῆμα) of the man, the material presence of the variegated creature appearing to the seer more vividly than the human body for which it stands (θαέομαι σαφές δράκοντα ποικίλον).⁴⁴ The snake takes on surrogate properties similar to the other serpents we have encountered, the leaping warriors of Pindar's O. 8 and the suckling beast of Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*. As with those polyvalent beasts, the body of Alcmaeon's snake reveals continuity across mortal generations, linking fathers and sons (ἐκ πατέρων παῖσι) in a rhythm of temporally displaced correspondence.⁴⁵ Alcmaeon will fight first (πρῶτον ἐν Κάδμου πύλαις), but not for the first time.

The critical, yet unspoken detail that Amphiaraus' speech is made by one who has returned not from Argos, but from beyond the grave, compounds the recursive qualities that the seer identifies in his son. As a revenant himself, Amphiaraus not only perceives his son's belated surrogate status, but mirrors it through his own spectral return. An absent presence and present absence within the Epigonois' campaign just as he is within Pindar's own song, the revenant Amphiaraus travels to the same place at the same time as his son, reduplicating the "second road" to Thebes in his own distinct, yet kindred reenactment. The shared spirit of father and son thus finds expression not only in the iconography of Alcmaeon's shining shield, but in the reciprocally reenacted surrogacy of their encounter.

The syncopated correspondences of Amphiaraus' relationship to Alcmaeon are brought more clearly into view when the seer recognizes a second body alongside that of his son. Adrastus is ὁ δὲ καμὼν προτέρᾳ πάθῃ as Amphiaraus calls

Pindar's own earlier works or to those of Aeschylus. The evidence for dating the ode is outlined by Pfeijffer 1999: 425.

⁴⁴ Alcmaeon is described only by means of the shield, in contrast with Adrastus whom Amphiaraus views without the aid of such material instruments. On the resonances of ποικίλος and related terminology, see above 204.

⁴⁵ On the thematization of generational continuity in the poem, see Foster 2017: 162–3.

him, the one who fought before. The presence of this second fighter *here* and *now* on the second expedition is inseparable from his earlier presence *then* and *there* – at the same site, at the same battle. Like Orestes in *Choephoroi*, Adrastus employs the same body in a new form, serving as his own mutable surrogate as he undertakes the same performance again. He is not born-after, but returned again. Unlike Alcmaeon, who finds surrogate expression and link to his father through his shield, Adrastus bears his “before” in his body. His πρότερον is the gauge against which Alcmaeon’s πρῶτον is measured. The recursive patterns established by Adrastus’ past are juxtaposed with the *there* and *then* of his future, which will see him collect the bones of his as-yet-living son. He alone (μόνος) will meet this fate, deprived of the surrogacy of a second generation that has been granted to Amphiaraus. The detail invokes a chiastic symmetry underpinning the passage, but which Pindar leaves unstated. Where the living body of Adrastus’ son will soon be no more than bones (ὀστέα), Alcmaeon’s father has already departed to elsewhere.

Alcmaeon, Adrastus, and Amphiaraus: revenants all, but each in a slightly different sense. But Pindar too stakes a claim as participant in the spectral reenactment unfolding within his song, exuberantly proclaiming the continuity between himself and the embedded speaker to whom he has just lent his voice.

τοιαῦτα μὲν
ἐφθέγγατ’ Ἀμφιάρηος. χαίρων δὲ καὶ αὐτός
Ἄλκμᾶνα στεφάνοισι βάλλω, ῥαίνω δὲ καὶ ὕμνω
(P. 8.55–7)

*Such things did Amphiaraus speak. And I too rejoice as I pelt
Alcmaeon with crowns and bestrew him with song.*

Pindar openly declares his surrogate status as a belated vocal impersonator of Amphiaraus (καὶ αὐτός). He has conjured what took place *there* and *then* (τὸν ὅνπερ ποτ’ 39), giving voice to the heroic ghost through his choral performance, and now he is unwilling to bring his joyous (χαίρων) mimetic reenactment to an end. Setting aside his concern for his present-day *laudandus*, the Aeginetan Aristomenes, Pindar opts instead to continue

Amphiaraus' praise of Alcmaeon. The substitution of the warrior from the past for the athlete of the present extends the conflation of framing and embedded speaker. Pindar's praise does not merely conform to that already spoken by Amphiaraus. His own song is directed at the same man (ῥαίνω δὲ καὶ ὕμνω).

Having taken up the speech of Amphiaraus and reenacted it through his own performance, Pindar steps into the syncopated structure of recursive return that his song has summoned forth. In yet another reduplication, Pindar replays the ghostly return of Amphiaraus, now casting himself in the role of Alcmaeon, with Alcmaeon, now a ghost himself, standing in for his spectral father. The narrative development is unexpected to say the least.⁴⁶

χαίρων δὲ καὶ αὐτός
Ἄλκμᾶνα στεφάνοισι βάλλω, ῥαίνω δὲ καὶ ὕμνω,
γείτων ὅτι μοι καὶ κτεάνων φύλαξ ἐμῶν
ὑπάντασεν ἰόντι γὰρ ὁμφαλὸν παρ' αἰοίδιμον,
μαντευμάτων τ' ἐφάψατο συγγόνοισι τέχναις.
(P. 8.56–60)

*And I too rejoice as I pelt Alcmaeon with crowns and bestrew
him with song, since he is my neighbor and guardian of
my possessions who encountered me as I journeyed to the
songful navel of the earth, and he set about his inborn skill of
prophecy.*

Reenacting the belated reenactment of Alcmaeon, the revenant who has displaced his addressee in the *here* and *now*, Pindar too brings himself into the presence of a specter. As with Amphiaraus appearing before the Epigonoι, Alcmaeon is not labeled as a ghost. He is identified as Pindar's neighbor (γείτων) and the guardian of his possessions (κτεάνων φύλαξ ἐμῶν), the man celebrated by his song. Yet the encounter between the two men, like the one between Alcmaeon and his father which it echoes, cannot be understood except as a kind of haunting. The hero, long dead, has returned to the world of the living, or better to the living world of song. Pindar does not dwell on the details of the meeting, noting only the

⁴⁶ Foster 2017 164: "it is hard to overstate the extraordinary nature of this encounter."

prophetic nature of Alcmaeon's apparition. Relying on the inborn skill (συγγόνοισι τέχναις) inherited from his father, Alcmaeon's specter reperforms the generational continuity that Amphiaraus observed when he played the ghost.⁴⁷ Like his father, Alcmaeon is gone yet present. He comes to stand before the poet (ὑπάντασεν), his return made manifest by the presence of one who can recognize him.

As the backdrop to the unsettled and shifting temporality of the two interwoven, reduplicating spectral encounters, the spatial dynamics of Pindar's song appear remarkably stable. Amphiaraus revisits seven-gated Thebes (ἐν ἑπταπύλοισι ... Θήβαις), the site of his earlier battle and (unacknowledged) death, at the time when the Epigonoι arrive from Argos (όπότ' ἄπ' Ἄργεος). As a revenant, Amphiaraus returns not from the city of his birth but from his new home, elsewhere. His destination, however, is shared with the belated surrogates who retrace his route along a "second road." The site of Thebes functions as a conduit, an instrumentalized space, that links them and permits the fusion of their disparate temporalities and divergent states. Pindar too enters the ghostly harmony through his native connection to Thebes, the place from which he draws his song.⁴⁸ Alcmaeon appears to him there as a neighbor (γείτων) who inhabits the city where he, like his father before him, finds surrogate reperformance amongst the living.

The stable geography of Thebes, which underpins the ghostly returns of Amphiaraus and Alcmaeon, does not cohere throughout the whole of Pindar's song. Like the revenants of his mythical narrative, Pindar too is a traveler, making his way to Delphi, the tuneful navel of the earth (ιδόντι γὰς ὀμφαλὸν παρ' αἰοίδιμον).⁴⁹ With the poet's metaphorical arrival at Delphi, the site of the gods' quadrennially repeated athletic celebrations, the spectral visitations of Thebes are replaced by another pattern of recursions. Multiplicities of

⁴⁷ Foster 2017: 165. Hubbard 1993 argues that it is in fact Amphiaraus, not Alcmaeon, whom Pindar encounters, a claim persuasively countered by Pfeijffer 1999: 541–4, who offers a survey of the colorful scholarly debate.

⁴⁸ Lefkowitz 1991: 82–6, Berman 2015: 56–65.

⁴⁹ Martin 2004: 352–8.

bodies meet with multiplicities of place as Pindar reflects on the reenactments that his *laudandus* has performed through his bodily feats across the Greek world. In Delphi, in Megara, at Marathon, on Aegina (78–80), threefold wins (νίκαις τρισσαῖς 80) are met with four bodies piled one atop the next (τέτρασι δ' ἔμπετες ὑπόθεν σωματέσσι 82–3). The sympathy between athlete and poet, so commonly invoked throughout Pindar's epinician odes,⁵⁰ is here expressed in a distinctly recursive pattern of embodied performance.

The geographic scope of the poem is not limited to Pindar's Theban encounters, but nor do Aristomenes' athletic reperformances entirely eclipse the haunted theater of the song. At the close of the ode, Pindar returns to the ghostly theme of his Theban narratives,⁵¹ couching his thoughts not in a mythical narrative but in a sweeping gnomic assertion. The lines are generally taken as a reflection on the transitory state of mortals; the brief and uncertain nature of human life. But, in light of the poem's earlier spectral encounters, the sentiment can also be understood as a reflection on the revenants of Pindar's song, and on his poetics of theatrical reenactment more broadly.

ἐπάμεροι· τί δέ τις; τί δ' οὐ τις; σκιᾶς ὄναρ 95
 ἄνθρωπος. ἀλλ' ὅταν αἴγλα διόσδοτος ἔλθῃ,
 λαμπρὸν φέγγος ἔπεστιν ἀνδρῶν καὶ μελιχρὸς αἰὼν.
 Αἴγινα φίλα μᾶτερ, ἔλευθέρῳ στόλῳ
 πόλιν τάνδε κόμιζε Διὶ καὶ κρέοντι σὺν Αἰακῷ
 Πηλεΐ τε κάγαθῷ Τελαμῶνι σὺν τ' Ἀχιλλεΐ.
 (P. 8.95–100)

Men of a day, what is someone, and what is not? Man is the dream of a shade. But whenever god-given splendor arrives, men enjoy the shining light and gentle life. O my dear mother, Aegina, care for this city on its free sailing with Zeus and great Aiacus and Peleus and with noble Telamon and Achilles.

Returning to the spectral themes that ran through his mythical narrative, Pindar now situates all of mankind within the

⁵⁰ Steiner 1986: 111–21.

⁵¹ The connection is made, albeit to a different end, by Burnett 2005: 237.

sphere of theatrical surrogacy. The term σκιά, a common way of designating ghosts from Homer onwards, shares the mimetic and artisanal resonances more readily associated with its near synonym, εἰδωλον.⁵² Pindar's almost hyperbolic position of the shade within a dream (σκιᾶς ὄναρ), another marker of theatrical semblance and uncanny surrogacy, emphasizes the gnome's reliance on models of mimetic reduplication. The structure of semblances and uncertain identities extends to the riddling questions that introduce the reflection: τί δέ τις; τί δ' οὐ τις; Although they are not posed with explicit reference to performance, the questions (echoing those of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*) are perfectly suited to the iterative voices and bodies of Pindar's theatrical songs. Who are the mimetic surrogates who bring the disparate figures – poet, performer, mythical hero, modern-day victor – together to share the presence of a common song? And who are they *not*? Each is both himself and another, finding his voice and body recomposed in another form. And it is the deceptive transience of this song, a thing whose performance is always and only of a day (ἐπ'ἀμερος),⁵³ that makes its repetition and renewal so unsettling. Each surrogate performer is only a temporary inhabitant of his role. Each ghostly return of voices and bodies from the past – both the past inside the song and the past of the song's own performance – is cut short to make room for the next, as those who were haunted recede into the crease from which they too in turn haunt those to come. Ghosts are not exceptional for Pindar. They are the very essence of his poetic world.

As he bids farewell to his *laudandus*, Pindar turns to yet another place, the city of the victor's birth. This final geographic location marks the victor's own return, completing what Kurke has identified as the epinician “loop of *nostos*.”⁵⁴ But Pindar does not invoke his *laudandus* in his concluding apostrophe to “mother Aegina.” His description is of a city that, like Thebes, is haunted by the sailings of ghostly

⁵² Cf. *Ag.* 839 ὁμίλιας κάτωπυρον, εἰδωλον σκιᾶς, *Eur. Andr.* 745 σκιά ἀντίστοιχος ὤς.

⁵³ Cf. Grethlein 2007: 376 on the measure of a day in *Persians*.

⁵⁴ Kurke 1991: esp. 15–34.

generations, Aiacus and his descendants whose past exploits so often find new life in Pindar's songs.⁵⁵ The ease with which Pindar moves from one place to another in his song, from Thebes to Delphi to Aegina, a characteristic feature of his poetic style that has been well-explored by scholars,⁵⁶ comes into even sharper focus when considered in contrast to the geography of Aeschylean song. In one sense, spatial fluidity is a hallmark of Aeschylus' compositions as well. One need only think of the dramatic events at Aulis reenacted by the Chorus in the *Agamemnon* parodos or the vivid description of the fighting at Salamis in *Persians*, the play to which we will turn in the next section. And yet, there is a difference between Pindar's versatility of place and that found in Aeschylus. When Aeschylus' Chorus remember Aulis, they do so from a definite place and time – before the palace of Agamemnon on the day of Troy's destruction. When the messenger of *Persians* recalls the battle of Salamis, he too is firmly situated in the royal court at Sousa as the Queen and her subjects await Xerxes' return. The new locations invoked by Pindar, by contrast, move the song itself. Pindar resists the impulse to provide a firm ground against which to gauge his geographic flights, instead displacing any previously adopted coordinates as he permits his compositions to travel in space and time.

The wide-ranging geography of Pindar's P. 8 facilitates the arrival and departure of voices and bodies, ghosts who emerge from unseen places to take their presence within the performance. But just as the ghosts of Amphiaras and Alcmaeon arrive at Thebes without a clear designation of their status as revenants from the world of the dead, so too the physical relationship of the poet (and his performers) to the city of Thebes is left ambiguous. The paradoxically untethered location of Thebes within P. 8 as a whole, despite the otherwise relatively

⁵⁵ On Aiakid myth and its connection to Aegina, see Burnett 2005: 13–28. The “free sailing” may allude, as Nagy 1990: 176–7 has argued, to a tradition of returning semblances (likely cult statues, though Nagy posits bones) of the Aiakidai to the island mentioned by Herodotus (8.64.2), on which see Fearn 2017: 74–80.

⁵⁶ In addition to Martin 2004's discussion of P. 8, see e.g. Carne-Ross 1976 on O. 6, Felson 1999 on P. 4 and Felson 2004a on P. 9.

comprehensible geography of the site of ghostly return, is reflected in the song's more widespread approach to questions of space. As Richard Martin has demonstrated, P. 8 relies disproportionately on relationships of "proximity or contiguity" to construct its spatial structures.⁵⁷ The many forms of "implicit deixis" in the song create a sense of vividness through the connection of figures and places. But while the attention to shared spaces and the contact between physical bodies creates a sense of presence, of substance and mimetic materiality, it nevertheless stops short of locating P. 8 within an identifiable *here*, even a temporary one. Pindar may link himself to Thebes through his intimate encounters with the ghostly spirits that haunt the city, but he does not pinpoint the place from which these recollections are made. There is no clear indication of whether Thebes is *here* or *there*. For all of the relationships of contiguity that P. 8 develops, neither of the ghost stories is located with respect to the song in which it is contained. The closest one comes to a deictic reference before the close of the poem is when Pindar identifies Delphi as τόθι, "there," "in that place." Faced with such persistent resistance to locating the song's spatial coordinates in any indexical form, the deictic reference to Aegina at the close of the poem (πόλιν τάνδε) represents an unanticipated fixed location. It offers the song's first firm *here* just as the performance draws to its close.

Scholars may discern a clue to the location of the song's premiere in the intimacy that Pindar shows for the home city of his *laudandus*,⁵⁸ but the concluding deictic flourish of P. 8 can hardly be treated as documentary evidence of historical events. More importantly, the belated indexical reference does little to reverse the geographic uncertainty that has characterized the song up to this point. The persistent absence of deictic language in P. 8 follows a pattern that is found throughout Pindar's works and ensures that his compositions cultivate a fluctuating and unstable spatial structure that could never obtain in Aeschylus' dramas. The divergence of approach has

⁵⁷ Martin 2004: 346–7.

⁵⁸ Gentili and Bernardini 1995: 213.

been documented by Giambattista D'Alessio whose statistical comparison of the use of the deictic pronoun ὅδε in dramatic and lyric choral poetry reveals a vast disparity in the frequency of deictic language. Whereas a deictic pronoun is used, on average, once every 9.8 lines in Aeschylus, the rate of occurrence in Pindar is once every 71.1 lines.⁵⁹ Although deictic language can be, and often is, used by these poets to gesture to what is elsewhere (so-called *deixis am phantasma*), the scale of the imbalance nevertheless reflects a divergence in approach to space. Even when one accounts for the disparate uses to which deictic language can be put, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Aeschylus, alongside his dramatic counterparts, gives a shape and weight to the imagined world of his songs, situating bodies and voices in a definite and palpable *here*, in a way that Pindar, like his non-dramatic counterparts, does not. Clear confirmation of D'Alessio's thesis can be found in a strikingly unorthodox composition of Bacchylides, his dithyramb for the Athenians in which the mythical Athenian king Aegeus and his subjects engage in a dialogue as they as they await the arrival of Theseus in Athens.⁶⁰ As outlined in the Introduction, Bacchylides' scripted exchange is nearly indistinguishable from a "dramatic" *amoibaion* in its formal structure. The anxious questions of the chorus of Athenians are paired against the haughty responses of their king in two matched stanzas, with no narrative voice giving context to the scene. The exchange

⁵⁹ D'Alessio 2007: 101; also considered are the works of Sophocles (a rate of one usage per 9.4 lines), Euripides (one per 11 lines), and Aristophanes (one per 37.8 lines). D'Alessio analyzes occurrence per word as well, with similar results: Aesch. 1/47.97 words; Soph. 1/51.68; Eur. 1/56.22; Aristoph. 1/233.49; Pindar 1/435. Noting the "stadio intermedio" of comedy, D'Alessio asserts that "non si tratta quindi meramente di un fenomeno legato al teatro in quanto tale, ma di una caratteristica propria di un genere di spettacolo in cui il testo costantemente attira attenzione su quello che lo spettatore deve vedere." (102). D'Alessio includes both tragedy and satyr drama in this category. I do not here attempt to incorporate his findings concerning dramatic comedy, which is not a subject of this book. Nevertheless, the data and D'Alessio's interpretation of them have important implications for how the claims I make in this book relate to a more complete picture of fifth-century choral poetics. On the related use of vocative οὗτος in drama, see Jacobson 2015.

⁶⁰ D'Alessio 2007: 98–9 addresses Bacch. 18 briefly, but his primary interest is in Pratinas' so-called hyporcheme (PMG 708 = TrGF4F3) which frequent use of deictics suggest is excerpted from a satyr drama, as many have long suspected.

may well have been performed by chorus and actor in costume and mask at its Athenian premiere, further emphasizing the “dramatic” qualities of the song.⁶¹ But when Bacchylides’ dialogue is examined for deictic language of the type D’Alessio finds prominently in dramatic compositions, there is none to be found. Although Bacchylides seems to adopt all of the trappings of tragic performance in his dialogic dithyramb, the absence of deictic markers distinguishes his work from that of his dramatic contemporaries.

The hauntings of Pindar’s P. 8 bring bodies and voices from the past into presence. The song creates a shared space of exchange – of physical and vocal proximity – that generates a syncopated pattern of surrogacy and recursion. Yet, like Bacchylides’ Athenian dithyramb, Pindar’s poem never firmly establishes a reliable geographic foundation to which his revenants return. There is often no *here* within and through which the *nows* and *thens* and *theres* of the song can be channeled. When Pindar deploys deictic language, it most often serves to complicate and redouble the geographic coordinates of his song, as we saw in P. 4.⁶² The return of Pindar’s ghosts depends on place, but no such geographic certainty is required for his song. This distinction between the geographic specificity of internally narrated revenants and the ever-shifting coordinates of theatrical song itself is a characteristic of Pindar’s approach that is not shared with his dramatic contemporary. Although both poets are concerned with the syncopated surrogacies of choral performance, this incongruity pinpoints an important structural divergence in their theatrical compositions.

Return to Sousa

Aeschylus’ *Persians*, like Pindar’s P. 8, is a poem of returns, of ghosts and ghostly presences conjured into presence from *elsewhere*. Geography is once again central to understanding

⁶¹ Maehler 1997: 211.

⁶² Above 80–95.

spectral recurrence, but Aeschylus' dramatic composition offers a markedly different approach to the model of the ghost's return. Aeschylus maps the spatial coordinates of *Persians*' multiple revenants, dead and alive, through the sequential entrances of each character. Like Pindar's parade of ghostly encounters in P. 8, each new figure represents an iteration and reprisal of what came before, blending living and dead in an undifferentiated pattern of spectral recursion. But unlike Pindar, Aeschylus brings his revenants into a clearly demarcated *here*.

As Oliver Taplin's seminal work has demonstrated, stage entrances are often heightened moments of significance within Greek drama.⁶³ Because of the rarity with which new characters appear, "mere paces on stage become vital, focal events."⁶⁴ With only six entrances in the entire drama, *Persians* represents an extreme example of this broader alignment of economy and significance, with the arrival of each new character offering a different perspective of what it means to return to Sousa.⁶⁵ The recursive syncopation of the drama, expressed through the succession of returns that play out on the stage, gives shape to a spectral geography that diverges from, though is not at odds with, the space of Pindar's haunted songs.

The difference in approach is made evident from the moment that Aeschylus brings his Persian Chorus into view. Where P. 8 conspicuously avoids indexical geography until its final lines (πόλιν τάνδε P. 8.99), the fixed coordinates of Aeschylus' stage are established in the Chorus' very first words.

Τάδε μὲν Περσῶν τῶν οἰχομένων
Ἑλλάδ' ἐς αἶαν πιστὰ καλεῖται

(*Pers.* 1–2)

*Here [we]⁶⁶ are called the trusted [men/councilors] of
those who have departed to the land of Greece.*

⁶³ The nature and significance of entrances and exits in the plays of Aeschylus is explored in detail in the seminal Taplin 1977, see also Taplin 1978: 21–40.

⁶⁴ Taplin 1978: 21.

⁶⁵ Taplin 1977: 124–7 identifies *Persians* as a *nostos* play, with its dramatic structure built around the return(s) of its central character(s).

⁶⁶ On the third-person usage (καλεῖται), see Garvie 2009: 49.

The deictic τᾶδε, the very first word of the play, introduces and grounds the presence of the Chorus in an emphatically substantive *here*. We are not told exactly where *here* is. But although the specific location may be as yet undefined,⁶⁷ the Chorus' deliberate opening declaration establishes an unmistakable foundation on which the mimetic world of the drama will be built. At the same time, the *here* of the mimetic stage is not the only location invoked in the Chorus' first words. *Here* is introduced through its contrasting relationship to *there*: Greece, the place to which the departed have gone. All of Asia has been emptied, the Chorus will later lament, the bodies of her men sent elsewhere.⁶⁸ The detail is critical within a play organized around the anticipation and realization of returns from afar, but it also calls attention to the spatial inversion of the performance itself. The Greek theater, filled with men who may themselves have fought the Persians troops invading their lands (coming *here*), is transposed into the distant world of the enemy, a place from which Greece, not Asia, is a vague and foreign land.⁶⁹ The spatial relationship between *here* and *there* is thus doubly resonant, conspicuously aligning the mimetic *elsewhere* with the extra-mimetic (what Fischer-Lichte would call *phenomenal*) geography of the play.⁷⁰ But Greece does not represent the only *there* envisioned from the mimetic stage. Alongside the Persian soldiers' destination, the Chorus offer a detailed catalogue of the many places from which the men have been marshaled.⁷¹ By complicating the spatial coordinates of *here* and *there*, this virtual tour of the Persian empire anticipates

⁶⁷ The assumption that the location would have been made apparent by the *skene* decoration is challenged by Kampourelli 2016: 88.

⁶⁸ Harrison 2000 and Said 2007: 71–2 detail how the emptiness of the land is a recurrent theme throughout the drama.

⁶⁹ Jouanna 2009, Grethlein 2010: 75.

⁷⁰ A further *elsewhere* emerges from Aeschylus' appropriation of the nearly identical first words of Phrynichus' *Phoenissae* (fr. 8 τᾶδ' ἐστὶ Περσῶν τῶν πάλοι βεβηκότων).

⁷¹ Ruffy 2004: 13–14 explores the use of *deixis am phantasma* to bring the unseen marshalling of the army into presence. Alongside the markedly mobile geography with which they imbue the parodos, the Chorus serve as surrogates, first for the bodies of the departed army (1–7), and then for the women, to whose coming grief they give voice (116–25). On the latter, see Hopman 2013.

the competing layers of *elsewheres* that will soon impinge on the mimetic space of the stage.

By simultaneously identifying the embodied speakers and their location, the Chorus' inaugural τὰδε betokens a spatial thematization of arrival/return that will continue to be developed throughout the play. Thus, the precise location of the Chorus' *here*, left unstated in their opening song, is articulated with the entrance of the first character, the widowed queen, who arrives from the royal palace.⁷²

ταῦτα δὴ λιποῦσ' ἱκάνω χρυσεοστόλμους δόμους
καὶ τὸ Δαρείου τε κάμὸν κοινὸν εὐνατήριον.
καί με καρδίαν ἀμύσσει φροντίς· ἐς δ' ὑμᾶς ἔρῳ
μῦθον, οὐδαμῶς ἄμαντις οὔσα δέιματος, φίλοι,
(*Pers.* 159–62)

*I come here, leaving my gold-gilt home and the marriage
chamber shared by myself and Darius. Indeed, care cuts my
heart and I speak to you in no way not prophesying fear, o
friends ...*

Atossa is not a revenant, literal or metaphorical, since she, like the Chorus, has remained in Sousa throughout the expedition. Nevertheless, her role in the play is characterized throughout by theatrical recursions and repetitions. The vivid dream (ἐναργὲς εἰδόμεν 179) that has brought her to the stage, itself the culmination of an iterative series of visions brought on by the absence of her son (176–8), will, like that of Clytemnestra in *Choephoroi*, be generative of embodied reenactments. Not only does the dream appearance of Xerxes and Darius anticipate both figures' eventual returns, but the vision also motivates libations which will be reprised as the necromantic invocations performed on-stage (δεύτερον δὲ χρὴ χοὰς / γῆ τε καὶ φθιτοῖς χέασθαι 219–20).⁷³ Indeed, her very entrance onto the stage will itself be thematized as a theatrical reenactment as she first repeats, and then fails to repeat, its

⁷² The location is adumbrated by the Chorus at 140, but not explicitly specified.

⁷³ The first, unseen libations are also a kind of reenactment, as the antagonism of the two mirrored bodies of Atossa's dream – the Greek and Persian women whom Xerxes yokes to his chariot – is repeated in the hostile encounter between the eagle and falcon who attend her prayers the next morning (205–9).

movement.⁷⁴ The mirrored bodies of her dream – the Greek and Persian women whom Xerxes yokes to his chariot – are a somatic expression of the spatial opposition with which the Chorus have located the stage. But even as Atossa’s first entrance embeds the drama within yet another *elsewhere*, it also underlines the importance of the stage’s shared *here* as a place in which the queen finds the embodied companionship of the Chorus (ἐς δ’ ὑμᾶς ἐρῶ... φίλοι).⁷⁵ The circumstances recall the physical proximity that joined bodies in space in Pindar’s P. 8, but Aeschylus’ emphasis on the Queen’s arrival (ικάνω) introduces a deictic specificity – a *here* – that is conspicuously absent in Pindar.

Following Atossa’s appearance from the palace, revenants begin to make their way back from farther afield. The messenger, whose absence was lamented by the Chorus in their opening lines,⁷⁶ is the first traveler to reach the stage and his return establishes an important model for understanding the play’s subsequent entrances.⁷⁷ Standing as a prototype for the revenants who will follow him, the messenger returns to Sousa as if from death. He is not a ghost, but his celebration of a return that he had thought was lost casts his arrival as if it were a revival: καὺτὸς δ’ ἀέλπτως νόστιμον βλέπω φάος *I myself look upon this unexpected light of return* (261). “To look upon the light” is commonly used as periphrasis meaning “to live” in archaic Greek, a sense that the messenger himself will soon employ when he reports that “Xerxes himself is alive and looks upon the light” (Ξέρξης μὲν αὐτὸς ζῇ τε καὶ φάος βλέπει 299).⁷⁸ The messenger returns from battle as if making his way back from world of the dead.

⁷⁴ Taplin 1977: 98–100. On Atossa’s failure to return to the stage a third time, see Thalmann 1980: 264–7, Michelini 1982: 136–40.

⁷⁵ The palace too is a shared space (τὸ Δαρείου τε καὶ μὲν κοινὸν εὐνατήριον), belonging to Atossa and her dead husband.

⁷⁶ The Chorus’ lamentations are equally concerned with the army’s past departure and the lack of its anticipated return: κοῦτε τις ἄγγελος οὔτε τις ἵππεύς / ὅστυ τὸ Περσῶν ἀφικνεῖται. *No messenger or horseman has arrived at the city of the Persians* (14–15).

⁷⁷ The signal importance of the messenger’s role is underscored by the fact, noted by Dickin 2009: 16, that his is the largest speaking role in the play after the Chorus.

⁷⁸ Grethlein 2010: 76 suggests that the messenger’s invocation of “light” replaces the common (perhaps expected) epic formulation “day” of return.

The parallel that the messenger draws between Greece, a place so distant from Sousa that the Queen is not certain of its location (231), and the underworld is not the first alignment of these two locations in *Persians*. The symmetry of the two pivotal *theres* has already been invoked in the play's first lines, when the Chorus establish the *here* (τάδε) of the stage in contrast to Greece, the place to which the Persians have departed (Περσῶν τῶν οἰχομένων Ἑλλάδ' ἐς αἶαν). The verb οἰχομαι can denote both a geographic departure and an existential one, synonymous with death (as in the English "the departed"). The first sense may be the primary one at work in the Chorus' expression, but the messenger's allusive phrasing makes clear that the second meaning was already at work in the inaugural definition of Greece as *elsewhere*.⁷⁹ The messenger's proleptic return thus establishes an unmistakable correlation between the play's two most resonant *elsewheres*, the places from which Darius and Xerxes will make their duplicate returns to Sousa.

The messenger has made the difficult journey back from *there*, and serves as conduit between the two locations. Like his counterpart in *Seven Against Thebes*, the Persian messenger will reenact what he has seen and heard. Past events, actions unseen and unheard, bodies and voices from off-stage are brought into presence through the performative surrogacy of one who was *there then*, but is *here now*. The messenger himself makes his role explicit when he prefaces his account with a claim of authority based on his presence at the battle (καὶ μὴν παρών γε κοῦ λόγους ἄλλων κλύων, / Πέρσαι, φράσαιμ' ἄν οἱ' ἐπορσύνθη κακά. *Indeed, I was present and did not hear accounts of others, Persians, and am able to reveal how the evils transpired* (266–7)). Keenly aware of his surrogate status, the messenger grapples with the task of conveying the events to which he, alone amongst those now in Sousa, was witness.⁸⁰ As we have already seen in

⁷⁹ As Garvie 2009: 50 notes, the shift from βεβηκότων to οἰχομένων in Aeschylus' adaptation of Phrynicus' opening line introduces a "sinister ambiguity."

⁸⁰ Grethlein 2007: 368–9. Barrett 2002: 40–6 details how the use of Homeric allusion further underscores the messenger's sensitivity to his role as intermediary.

Seven Against Thebes, dramatic messengers are, by their very nature, both a challenge to, and a way of reflecting on, traditional notions of theatrical reenactment. The lengthy performance of the Persian messenger furnishes much material for consideration in this regard, creating a complex internal geography of *here* and *there* within his account, even as he plays up the gap between the *here* and *now* of his reenactment and the *there* and *then* of the battle against the Greeks.⁸¹ The messenger's performance, which is as much a tale of voices as of bodies,⁸² brings the distant events back home with him, repeatedly employing deictic language to bring the distant scene into graphic presence.⁸³ The vividness of his embedded speech, discussed in [Chapter 1](#), brings a Greek voice, and with it the urgency of the battle (νῦν ὑπὲρ πάντων ἄγων 405), into the removed and belated scene in Sousa, where the messenger's surrogate reenactment permits Atossa and the Chorus to experience events that already belong to the past. In this overtly self-aware performative guise, no less than in his role as embodied revenant, the messenger serves as a paradigm for those who will follow.

Darius' arrival on-stage is the dramatic heart of *Persians*, a spectacular moment of stagecraft that is also a reflection on and of the very essence of theatrical reenactment. Darius' presence is an embodied manifestation of the play's uncanny ability to fuse past and present. His ghostly appearance calls attention to how the drama as a whole reenacts events that have already taken place, bringing voices, bodies, spirits from elsewhere into presence.⁸⁴ He recasts the messenger's performance of vocal surrogacy as an embodied act, and, in so doing, throws the mimetic space of the drama – the *here* through which the theatrical recursions are made possible – into sharp relief.

⁸¹ On the possible political motivations of the messenger's account, see Goldhill 1988, Hall 1996: 11, Harrison 2000: 31–9.

⁸² The sonic features of the report are treated with characteristic insight by Gurd 2016: 64–7, who interprets the play as a whole as developing “a model of affective contagion in which sound and its passionate implications were central.”

⁸³ Ruffy 2004: 14–16.

⁸⁴ Grethlein 2007: 380–3 calls it a “mise en abyme.”

As is typical of ghostly encounters in Pindar and Aeschylus, little emphasis is placed on Darius' status as a spirit. By contrast with the revenants of Pindar's P. 8, there is no question that Darius is dead (ὦ πολύκλαυτε φίλοισι θανών 674). Yet the Chorus only once describe him as a ghost, and then in terms that emphasize continuity with the other figures of the drama (πέμψατ' ἔνερθεν ψυχὴν ἐς φῶς 630).⁸⁵ Although ψυχή (soul) can denote a ghost, as indeed it almost always does in Homer, by the fifth century the term was more commonly applied to the living. The ambiguity is pointedly underscored at the conclusion of the scene, when Darius himself employs the same term to describe the Chorus as he bids them farewell (ὕμεις δέ, πρέσβεις, χαίρετ', ἐν κακοῖς ὁμῶς / ψυχῇ διδόντες ἡδονὴν καθ' ἡμέραν 840–1).⁸⁶ But the Chorus already achieve the same end by pairing their solitary reference to Darius' ghostly state with a mention of his return to the light (ἐς φῶς). The turn of phrase echoes the messenger's jubilant cry (ἀέλπτως νόστιμον βλέπω φάος). The resonant language calls attention to the continuity between these two “homecomings” from elsewhere; one from Greece, the other from below (ἔνερθεν).⁸⁷

As with the messenger's return and subsequent performance, geographic concerns predominate. Throughout their invocation, the Chorus conceive of Darius' absence in spatial terms. He is hidden under the earth (ἧ φίλος ἀνὴρ, φίλος ὄχθος / φίλα γὰρ κέκευθεν ἦθη 647–8) and they bid him to come up, come *here* (ἴθι, ἰκοῦ· ἔλθ' ἐπ' ἄκρον κόρυμβον ὄχθου 658–9).⁸⁸ Upon his arrival, Darius too is preoccupied with the geography of his return, noting how his wife and the Chorus stand close by his tomb (λεύσσων δ' ἄκοιτιν τὴν ἐμὴν τάφου πέλας 684, ὕμεις δὲ θρηνεῖτ' ἐγγύς ἐστῶτες τάφου 686), the location that permitted

⁸⁵ Aguirre 2006: 109.

⁸⁶ See also *Pers.* 441–2 Περσῶν ὅσοιπερ ἦσαν ἀκμαῖοι φύσιν, / ψυχὴν τ' ἄριστοι κεύθνεϊαν ἐκπρεπείς.

⁸⁷ Bakola 2014 explores the play's persistent focus on depth and the spaces under the earth.

⁸⁸ Taplin 1977: 115 observes that the “conventional imperatives [of the Chorus] are particularly conspicuous and lead in an urgent and vivid way towards Darius' entry.” On the staging of this scene, see Taplin 1977: 116–19, and more recently Rehm 2002: 239, Wiles 1997: 71–2, Sommerstein 2010a: 37–40, Garvie 2009: xliv–liii, Bakola 2014, Kampourelli 2016: 93–9.

their libations and cries to reach him in the world below.⁸⁹ Darius' spectral presence will turn attention once more to the *here* of Sousa, to the mimetic space of the drama centered around the tomb which, like the Trojan wall of Pindar's O. 8, is both conduit and stage for his ghostly performance.⁹⁰ But Darius' self-proclaimed arrival also invites us to consider the distinctive features of Aeschylus' dramatic geography and its divergence from that of his theatrical contemporary. Where Pindar, as we saw, destabilizes the mimetic space into which the ghost is made present by allowing his song to travel across a series of haunted locations, Aeschylus maps the "crease" or "fold" of his theatrical reenactment onto a single mimetic landscape, albeit one that is informed by the absent presence of a range of critical *theres*. In the former, the *here* into which the ghosts return is as mutable and uncertain as the specters themselves. In the latter, the stable *here* nevertheless proves a dissonant and unstable platform for revenants, like the messenger and Darius, who bring elsewhere back with them to the stage.

The distinctive *here* within which Aeschylus casts Darius' ghostly return is epitomized by the announcement of his arrival with an emphatically enjambed declaration: ἦκω. Darius' claim to presence recasts the ἰκάνω (159) of Atossa's earlier entrance. Where his wife fixed the location of the stage in the royal city of Sousa through the appearance of her body, Darius' return makes clear the degree to which the *here* of *Persians* is a permeable and recursively spectral space.

ἔστι δ' οὐκ εὐέξοδον,
 ἄλλως τε πάντως χοῖ κατὰ χθονὸς θεοὶ
 λαβεῖν ἀμείνους εἰσὶν ἢ μεθίεναι. 690
 ὁμῶς δ' ἐκείνοις ἐνδυναστεύσας ἐγὼ
 ἦκω· τάχυνε δ', ὥς ἄμειπτος ὦ χρόνου·
 τί ἐστὶ Πέρσαις νεοχμὸν ἐμβριθεὶς κακόν;

(*Pers.* 688–93)

⁸⁹ Jouanna 1992: 48–52 discusses the staging of the ritual, and its relationship to the similar tomb-side rites in *Choephoroi*.

⁹⁰ Taplin 1977: 105 notes that the location of the tomb is not explicitly marked in the language of the play until 659, that is, until the Chorus and Darius have begun to make use of it as a conduit between Sousa and the underworld.

Locating the Revenant

There is no ready exit. Entirely the opposite. The gods below are more eager to take than to release. But nevertheless, since I hold power amongst them, I arrive. But hurry, that I may be blameless of time. What new evil weighs upon the Persians?

The first-person form of the verb ἤκω is a marked usage in Aeschylus, particularly, as here, in its position in the first foot of the line, emphatically denoting the arrival of a new character on-stage.⁹¹ The messenger of *Seven Against Thebes* employs it to announce his return from his scouting mission beyond the city walls: Ἐτεόκλεες, φέριστε Καδμείων ἄναξ, / ἤκω σαφῇ τὰ κεῖθεν ἐκ στρατοῦ φέρων, (39–40). Orestes uses it when he arrives at his father's tomb at the start of *Choephoroi* (ἤκω γὰρ ἐς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι. 3), and later Aegisthus will echo him when he makes his first appearance on stage (ἤκω μὲν οὐκ ἄκλητος, ἀλλ' ὑπάγγελος 838).⁹² In *Agamemnon*, the Chorus use the term to denote not their own first appearance, but that of Clytemnestra (ἤκω σεβίζων σόν, Κλυταιμῆστρα, κράτος 258),⁹³ and Orestes marks the unorthodox change of scene from Delphi to Athens in *Eumenides* with a similar address to (the temple of) Athena (ἄνασσ' Ἀθάναν, Λοξίου κελεύμασιν / ἤκω, δέχου δὲ πρηνεμένῳς ἀλάστορα, 235–6). Within *Persians*, the verb signals the return of Darius to the world of the living, but within the larger frame of Aeschylean drama, it signals his participation in the dramatic production: his arrival as a fully embodied, mimetic character within the play.

Given the prevalence of this specific form of self-proclaimed arrival, not only in Aeschylus but in dramatic forms more broadly,⁹⁴ one might even suggest that the very act of declaring

⁹¹ Griffith 1977: 118–19.

⁹² So too in *Prometheus Bound*, Oceanus announces his arrival: ἤκω δολιχῆς τέρμα κελεύθου ... (284).

⁹³ The precise moment of her arrival has been the subject of debate (see Taplin 1977: 280–5), but the use of ἤκω at this point can be understood to denote the Chorus' awareness of Clytemnestra's presence, even if she had inhabited the stage for some time.

⁹⁴ Usage in other dramatists varies. Of the eleven Sophoclean usages, only four are in the first foot (*Ant.* 394, *Phil.* 501, *OC* 287, 732) and three mark the arrival of a character (*Tra.* 984, *Phil.* 1413, *OC* 732), only one of which (*OC* 732) exhibits both characteristics. Euripides and Aristophanes more closely resemble Aeschylus. Of

ἦκω (*I am here*) amounted to a kind of dramatic self-definition, analogous to a hexameter poet invoking the Muse.⁹⁵ ἦκω is a signal of physical presence, of the actor, fully inhabiting the mimetic role of his character in body and voice, making himself manifest. It creates and affirms a mimetic place fixed in time and space (however imaginary) through the arrival of a body. It is the somatic equivalent of the abundance of deictic language that D'Alessio identifies as distinctive of drama. But by contrast with deictic pronouns, which can gesture both to what is seen and unseen, the first-person indicative ἦκω is necessarily a performative instantiation of the dramatic *here*. There is some reason to suspect that Aeschylus employed the verb deliberately to reflect on the way that bodies inhabit the spaces of his dramatic world. Two pointed uses of the verb, both in *Choephoroi* and both marked variations on the more common first-person indicative form, show Aeschylus exploiting the familiar dramatic claim of presence to comment on the theatrical reenactments within his own composition. The first use is made by Orestes, when he reveals himself to his sister by declaring that she has come into the sight (εἰς ὄψιν ἦκεις 215) of the one she had longed for. As discussed above, uncertainties attach themselves to the notion of sight (ὄψις) in light of Orestes' own spectatorship throughout the preceding scene. By linking a heightened focus on reciprocal performance with a second-person form of the verb (ἦκεις in place of the common form ἦκω), Aeschylus seems to be playing the mutual surrogacy of the siblings' bodies against the expectations of his audience. Electra may believe that it is Orestes, not herself, who has "entered" the stage, but the audience know that it is in fact Electra who made her entrance following that of

the sixty-four instances in Euripides, the majority (forty-two) are in first foot position, of those where evidence is available thirty-three out of fifty-four announce the arrival or return of a character to the stage, with a majority in the first foot. In Aristophanes, thirteen of sixteen instances are in the first foot, but three are quotes from Aeschylus (Ch. 3), of those for which there is evidence (and excluding the three quotations), seven out of eight mark the arrival of a character on the stage, again with the majority in the first foot.

⁹⁵ Taplin 1977: 49–60 argues for the critical structuring role of dramatic entrances and exits.

her brother, who has remained on-stage the whole time. In a similar vein, Orestes again employs the verb, now in the first-person future (ἥξω σὺν ἀνδρὶ τῷδ' 561), as he plans his Daulian deception. The verb here stands as a proleptic stage direction, detailing the entrance that Orestes and Pylades will soon make in the guise of other men.

In *Persians*, Aeschylus exploits the circumstances of a dead man's presence on the stage to bring the power of the term into relief.⁹⁶ But to understand its function, we must revisit the relationship between Darius and the messenger whose return to Sousa heralds his own. Darius only announces his arrival relatively late in his opening speech, after first detailing the labors (of Atossa and the Chorus) which have summoned him from below, and articulating the challenge of his return. Like the army, who left Sousa with bold hopes of a quick victory, Darius has found the way back to be far more challenging. The gods below, he explains, take more readily than they release (λαβεῖν ἀμείνους εἰσὶν ἢ μεθίεναι).⁹⁷ The difficult return recalls the messenger's detailed account of the army's struggles on their homeward journey, a subject to which he devoted his second longest speech of the play. His graphic narrative of the army's grueling progress back across the hostile lands of Boeotia, Macedonia, and Thrace, presents an implicit contrast with the ease of the outbound journey,⁹⁸ an asymmetry that Darius makes explicit in his account. Nevertheless, Darius, like the messenger, has returned to Sousa, to the light. If Darius' spectral appearance reenacts the messenger's return as another body brought back from beyond,⁹⁹ his ἥκω finds parallel in an

⁹⁶ It is noteworthy that Euripides places ἥκω in the mouth of his own ghost, Polydorus, as the very first word not only of the spirit, but also of the play itself ("Ἦκω νεκρῶν κευθμῶνα καὶ σκότου πύλας/ λιπῶν, *Hec.* 1–2) and elsewhere in prologues reserves the term for gods (Poseidon in *Tro.* and Dionysus in *Bac.*, both as the first word of the play, Hermes in *Ion* line 5).

⁹⁷ The line is also, perhaps, a commentary on the staging of the scene, which may have required the dead king to make his entrance from beneath the stage, rather than from the traditional entrances at its sides (Garvie 2009: li–lii discusses the various arguments in favor of this possibility with skepticism).

⁹⁸ Kitto 1961: 39, see also the discussion of Garvie 2009: 218–19.

⁹⁹ It is not clear if different masks or other conventions of costuming were used to denote the special status of dramatic ghosts. On masking conventions, Marshall 1999.

unlikely facet of his antecedent's performance. Long after his emotional outpouring upon arriving in Sousa, when he has fully embraced the necessity of recounting the events in distant Greece,¹⁰⁰ the messenger recounts how the fearsome sound of the Greek forces first began to reach the ears of the Persians, massed by the cliffs of Salamis.

πρῶτον μὲν ἡχῇ κέλαδος Ἑλλήνων πάρα
 μολπηδὸν εὐφήμησεν, ὄρθιον δ' ἄμα
 ἀντηλάλαξε νησιώτιδος πέτρας
 ἡχώ· φόβος δὲ πᾶσι βαρβάροις παρῆν
 γνώμης ἀποσφαλεῖσιν

390

(Pers. 388–92)

First the melodious cry of the Greeks sounded out around us with a peal, and at the same time the high-pitched echo cried back from the island's cliffs. Fear was in the heart of every Persian, and their wits were lost.

The “melodious cry” (ἡχῇ κέλαδος) is but one of the components of the messenger's dense soundscape, but the virtuosic description is suffused with theatrical interest. The sounds of the enemy, made into belated semblances by the messenger's report in Sousa, are already characterized by reduplication and surrogate reenactment on the (now) distant battlefield. The messenger recounts how a disembodied echo (ἡχώ), borne out from rocky cliffs (the landscape made into an instrument of vocal mimesis), shouted out in return (ἀντηλάλαξε) and yet simultaneously with (ἄμα) the shouts of the men readying for battle. Within the messenger's tightly constructed account, the echo (ἡχώ) that replicates the Greeks' peal (ἡχῇ) is postponed until the very end of the description. The belated placement elegantly mirrors the sonic effect being described, turning the messenger's description into a reenactment, a preview of the embedded speech in which the messenger will soon echo with his own voice the song of his Greek foes. But the seamless

¹⁰⁰ There is, however, a marked contrast between the messenger's recognition of his role as surrogate (ὅμως δ' ἀνάγκη πᾶν ἀναπτύξαι πάθος 254) and Darius' announcement of his arrival (ὅμως δ' ἐκείνοις ἐνδυναστεύσας ἔγω / ἦκα 691–2).

transition from reduplication to performance is also an anticipation of the necromantic scene to follow.

Just as the echo (ἡχώ) transforms the peal (ἡχῆ) into a reperformance in the mouth of the messenger, so Darius' arrival (ἦκω) turns the messenger's vocal surrogacy into a fully embodied resuscitation. Positioned at the same place at the start of the trimeter, Darius' ἦκω picks up on the rhythms of theatrical recurrence suggested by the messenger's ἡχώ to form an intertwined meditation of the dramatic nature of Aeschylus' theatrical project. As Tom Phillips has argued, the figure of echo/Echo can powerfully invoke the iterative sonic patterns of choral reperformance, as when Pindar calls upon Echo (Ἄχοϊ) in O. 14 to serve as his messenger, carrying his song to the underworld (μελαντειχέα νῦν δόμον / Φερσεφόνας ἔλθ', Ἄχοϊ, πατρὶ κλυτὰν φέροις' ἀγγελίαν 20–1).¹⁰¹ The underworld context of the Pindaric repetition has clear affinities with the theatrical specters under consideration in this chapter. By contrast with Pindar's Echo, who travels unseen into the realm of the shades, the ἦκω of Darius insists that we contemplate the embodied presence of the ghost before us.

The appearance of Darius, a specter returned to Sousa, offers a different perspective on the internal distinction between phenomenal and semiotic bodies that I began to explore in the [previous chapter](#).¹⁰² The ghostly presence of Darius is made manifest by means of the physical presence of an actor. The performer possessed of his own (phenomenal) body is present as a surrogate to bring the ghost's mimetic (semiotic) body to the stage. But it is not the mere presence of the actor that produces the somatic presence of Aeschylus' theater. Pindar too brings the voices of his songs to life through the surrogate bodies of performers. Rather, it is the creation of a fully present mimetic *here* within which the actor performs that creates the friction between semiotic and phenomenal form. In laying

¹⁰¹ Phillips 2016: 217–23.

¹⁰² *Persians* is also linked with *Choephoroi* through the strong thematization of clothing and costume as constitutive of embodied presence, a topic that I do not have space to explore here. On clothing in *Persians*, see esp. Thalmann 1980: 267–82, Said 2007.

claim to a fixed location before our eyes – beside his own tomb in Sousa – Darius’ revenant body is endowed with a material (phenomenal) substance that it could not achieve in the *there* and *then* of the netherworld. The presence of a *here* facilitates the presence of phenomenal bodies. The inverted world of the stage, recreating Sousa before the eyes of a Greek audience, conjures the ghost whose tomb is at its center. The space is not for this reason singular. Aeschylus’ stage is still a conduit to the uncertain domain of dreams and shades. But it is also a place in which those dreams and shades are endowed with the same phenomenal properties of the *here* in which they find form.

Revenants like Darius are not distinct from the other theatrical specters who find themselves made doubly present within the confines of Aeschylus’ mimetic landscape. They are simply more so – exaggerated variants of a typical form. Although it is wise to be cautious in assigning too much theoretical weight to ancient specters, there is some reason for speculating that Aeschylus, at least, may have seen a meta-theatrical, and meta-dramatic, potential in these otherworldly figures. The case largely stems from the fragmentary drama *Psychagogoi* (*Necromancers*), which reimagines Odysseus’ descent into the underworld (as recounted in *Odyssey* 12) for the dramatic stage. Very little of the play survives, and unfortunately no spectral apparitions have been preserved.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, we can glean from the fragments available to us that the play shares two critical characteristics with *Persians* (and with Aeschylus’ other extant ghost-play, *Eumenides*).¹⁰⁴ First, like *Persians*, *Psychagogoi* is deeply invested in the spatial dynamics that attach to revenants and the act of raising the dead. Our

¹⁰³ For recent discussions of the fragments, see Bardel 2005: 85–92, Cousin 2005, Mikellidou 2016. The collective noun *ἑσμός* (swarm fr. 273a.10), together with the vast catalogues of underworld spirits encountered by Odysseus in the *Odyssey*, suggests that more than one revenant made its way on to the stage, though we cannot be certain of this.

¹⁰⁴ The connections between the two plays are explored by Jouan 1981: 417, Cousin 2005: 140–3.

fragments stress the importance of performing incantation at a set location, the “dread lake” (φοβεράς λίμνας fr. 273a 2) that marks the boundary between above and below,¹⁰⁵ and the earth itself is invoked, alongside the underworld divinities, as the medium of the spectral apparitions (7–9).¹⁰⁶ Secondly, again like *Persians*, the ghosts of *Psychagogoi* are summoned back to the world of the living, brought up from under the earth (νυκτιπόλων / ἔσμον ἀνεῖναι ποταμοῦ στομάτων ... Στυγίῳς νῦ[σ]μοῖσιν ἀνεῖται fr. 273a 9–13).¹⁰⁷ The dramatic scene inverts the Homeric model on which the scene is based, in which Odysseus travels into the realm of the dead. Even with our limited understanding of the play, its title, *Psychagogoi*, which I have just translated as *Necromancers* but should more literally be rendered *Soul-leaders*,¹⁰⁸ offers a tempting link to the language of dramatic criticism. A century after Aeschylus’ death, “soul-leading” (ψυχᾱγωγία) was commonly accepted as one of the proper functions of drama.¹⁰⁹ Aristotle would famously claim tragedy able to “lead souls” (ψυχᾱγωγεῖν) through plot (μῦθος), and identify the dramatic spectacle as a “soul-leading” (ψυχᾱγωγικόν) facet of the genre.¹¹⁰ In this critical discourse, the souls in question appear to be those of the audience, rather than revenants brought back to the light on the stage.¹¹¹ But the connection between the almost incantatory effect of watching dramatic performance, on the one hand, and the ways in which the form itself is able to conjure and revive departed spirits on the stage should not be overlooked. Whether or not the term ψυχᾱγωγός, which Aeschylus also employs to describe the endeavors of the Chorus in *Persians*

¹⁰⁵ Macías Otero 2015: 141–2, Mikellidou 2016: 335–6.

¹⁰⁶ Cousin 2005: 143, 148, Macías Otero 2015: 137 who note that each of the three lines repeats the root χθον- at or near the beginning of the line. Cf. *Pers.* 627–8, 640–2, and *Ch.* 1–3, 124–5.

¹⁰⁷ Mikellidou 2016: 336. The broader tradition of *katabasis* narrative into which the Homeric Odysseus’ descent is explored by Dova 2012, Calvo Martínez 2013.

¹⁰⁸ See Sommerstein 2010b: 11–29 on the titles of Greek dramas.

¹⁰⁹ Hunter 2009: 37, Bassi 2017: 144–9.

¹¹⁰ *Poetics* 1450a33 and 1450b17, respectively, also *Timocles* fr. 6 K-A.

¹¹¹ See, however, Uhlig forthcoming for discussion of the alternative critical tradition amongst German thinkers of the nineteenth century.

(ψυχάγωγοῖς ὀρθιάζοντες γόοις 687) carried a pointedly literary-critical force in the first half of the fifth century it is difficult to say.¹¹² If it did, the title of *Psychagogoi* (and, to a lesser degree, the use in *Persians*) may well be a way for Aeschylus to signal the programmatic nature of a parade of ghosts conjured upon the dramatic stage. Conversely, it may be that the deeply programmatic and meta-dramatic nature of Aeschylus' spectral drama(s) motivated subsequent critical use of the term, as theoretical models developed around a play or series of plays that helped to facilitate understanding of dramatic performance. Although neither claim can be confirmed given the current limits of our knowledge, the connection should not be dismissed for want of evidence.

In contrast to the manifest uncertainties that surround the spectral drama of Aeschylus' *Psychagogoi*, we are fortunate to have the language – if not the staging¹¹³ – of Darius' return in *Persians* preserved in its entirety. In it we can see how dynamic physical presence, predicated on the fixed geography of the stage, in no way simplifies the temporal complexities of theatrical performance. As Darius arrives in Sousa not *not* for the first time, taking up his place amongst the comrades with whom he shared earlier days (ἡλικές θ' ἡβης ἐμῆς 681),¹¹⁴ his replicated presence unsettles the temporality of the mimetic space. The return of his body does not fully harmonize the *other* world from which he has come with that into which he has arrived anew. The revenant, once in step with the rhythms of Sousa, now offers a different time signature. He admonishes the Chorus to hurry, since he is answerable for (or answerable to?) time (692).¹¹⁵ Darius' haste, repeated again in his next address to the Chorus (μή τι μακιστῆρα μῦθον ἀλλὰ σύντομον λέγων / εἰπὲ καὶ πέραινε πάντα 698–9), stems in part from his ignorance

¹¹² Hunter 2009: 37 claims that “it is all but certainly Gorgias who stands behind this tradition,” which would make such a fact impossible.

¹¹³ For discussion of the problems, see Garvie 2009: xliv–liii, with bibliography.

¹¹⁴ Cf. 914 ἡλικίαν, 989 ἀγαθῶν ἐτάρων. Griffith 2007: 119: “What is unique about Dareios ... is that he is ritually conjured up from the dead before our very eyes, and that his own personal connection to the other characters is so close and direct, as husband, comrade, father, and king.”

¹¹⁵ τάχυνε δ', ὥς ἀμεμπτος ὦ χρόνου. *But hurry, so that I may be blameless of time.*

of the current situation in Sousa. He has not kept abreast of mortal affairs from his new home in the underworld and needs to be told of the new (νεοχμὸν 693) troubles that afflict the Persians. He must be brought up to speed, as it were.¹¹⁶ But Darius' urgency also underscores the rift between the revenant and those who have remained amongst the living, even as they inhabit the same geographic coordinates within Aeschylus' drama. Once Darius appears on-stage, the Chorus shudder to address, or even to look at, their erstwhile companion.

σέβομαι μὲν προσιδέσθαι,
σέβομαι δ' ἀντία λέξαι
σέθεν ἀρχαίῳ περὶ τάρβει

(Pers. 694–6)

*I dread to look upon [you], I dread to address you
face to face due to the/my ancient fear.*

Now that Darius is present before them (ἀντία, repeated at 701),¹¹⁷ a revenant to Sousa conjured by their own necromantic song, the Chorus do not dare to cross the gulf that separates living and dead.¹¹⁸ Although they readily sent their voices traveling into the realm below, a fact of which Darius himself reminds them (ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κάτωθεν ἦλθον σοῖς γόοις πεπεισμένος 697), the Chorus are overwhelmed at the embodied presence of someone who nevertheless retains his status as other, who remains *there* and *then* even as he is *here* before them *now*. The asymmetry of Darius and the Chorus, the sense that they are, in some way, out of step, is reflected in the unusual metrical structure of the exchange.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Garvie 2009: 279 suggests that the temporal concern reflects the limited time allotted for his return to the light. But I think that the observations of Grethlein 2007: 376 linking the messenger's temporal reflections to the time-limited nature of dramatic performance may be relevant here as well.

¹¹⁷ Compare P. 8.59, where Alcmaeon is said to have encountered (ὕπαντασεν) the traveling Pindar.

¹¹⁸ Cairns 1993: 206–7 claims that the reverence is a continuation from when Darius was still alive, but ἀρχαίῳ περὶ τάρβει (696) and δέος παλαιόν (703) need not be interpreted in such a way, particularly in light of Darius' invocation of past comradery with the Chorus (ὦ πιστὰ πιστῶν ἡλικές θ' ἥβης ἐμῆς / Πέρσαι γεραίοι 681–2) and the Chorus' own claim that it is the present circumstances that make dialogue a challenge (λέξας δύσλεκτα φίλοισιν 702). Furthermore, the Chorus do engage in dialogue with Darius at 787–800.

¹¹⁹ The metrical structure of the scene is discussed by Michelini 1982: 31–40.

The iambic trimeters of Darius' initial address to the Chorus are met by a truncated lyrical response, a continuation of the choral ode by which they invoked his ghostly apparition (694–6). Darius then shifts to trochaic tetrameters, as if searching for a rhythm that both can share (697–9). But the Chorus do not match his meter (700–2). They continue to sing, unwilling to relinquish the necromantic time signature through which they summoned his spirit when it was still at a distance.

Faced with the Chorus' silence, Darius finds an interlocutor in his widow, whose past intimacy he recalls (τῶν ἐμῶν λέκτρων γεραῖα ξύννομι', εὐγενὲς γύναι 704)¹²⁰ even as now her proximity to his tomb causes him concern (λεύσσω δ' ἄκοιτιν τὴν ἐμὴν τάφου πέλας / ταρβῶ *And seeing my wife close beside my tomb, I am struck with fear* 684–5). The disjunction, both geographic and temporal, that underpins Darius' relationship to the Chorus continues to color the scene as he enters into an extended verbal exchange with Atossa. At first, Darius expresses his manifest ignorance of all that has passed since his death. He interrogates his wife on the particulars of the Persians' misfortunes, requiring her to articulate even the most basic facts. He suspects a plague or civil war (715). Atossa clarifies: military defeat (716). He wonders which of his children has led the expedition (717) and what form the conflict took (719), and so it goes. Each of Darius' queries meets with a response from Atossa, his words recalling the frantic questions with which she, not long before, had bombarded the messenger, returned from the front. Darius has been called upon to reveal what is unknown, but there is much that is unknown to him as well.

Or rather, the particulars are unknown. Darius has, in fact, known of the events now being related to him for some time, by means of an oracle from Zeus. But, he explains, he did not expect them to come to fruition so soon.

φεῦ, ταχεῖά γ' ἦλθε χρησῶν πράξις, ἐς δὲ παῖδ' ἐμόν
Ζεὺς ἀπέσκηψεν τελευτὴν θεσφάτων· ἐγὼ δέ που

¹²⁰ The language recalls Darius' initial address to the Chorus: ἡλικὲς θ' ἤβης ἐμῆς / Πέρσαι γεραῖοι (681–2).

Locating the Revenant

διὰ μακροῦ χρόνου τάδ' ἤχουν ἐκτελευτήσιν θεοῦς·
ἀλλ', ὅταν σπεύδῃ τις αὐτός, χῶ θεὸς συνάπτεται.

(*Pers.* 739–42)

*Alas, quickly indeed has the enactment of the oracles arrived,
and Zeus has cast the completion of the prophecies upon my
son. I boasted that the gods would complete these things after
much time. But when someone moves in haste, even god gets
caught up in it.*

Upon his reappearance in Sousa, Darius invoked his fear of being held accountable for (or to) time. He had wanted to speed (τάχυνε 692) the Chorus' speech, but now the actions of others speed past his expectations (ταχεῖά ... χρησμών πρᾶξις). Not only is he out of step with those who share the stage with him, he is out of step with the events about which he has been called to give insight.

The temporal breach is given clearest articulation in Darius' insistence that his son Xerxes has disrupted the pattern of excellence that has heretofore characterized the Persian royal line. Under the spell of time and its syncopated rhythms and recursions, Darius reaches back into the past to gauge the disaster of the present. It is only against the iterative patterns of the city's past that Xerxes' loss can be understood as the greatest that has ever befallen Sousa, never to be forgotten (μέγιστον, ἀείμνηστον, οἷον οὐδέπω / τόδ' ἄστὺ Σούσων <τ'> ἐξεκείνωσεν πέδον 760–1). But it is not just the past of the city that makes Xerxes' catastrophic undertaking so exceptional, it is also the generations of his forebears, whom Darius recalls in a florid catalogue (Μῆδος γὰρ ἦν ὁ πρῶτος κτλ. 765–78). Drawing on the models of generational surrogacy and reenactment familiar from Pindar's O. 8, P. 2, and P. 8, Darius claims continuity with the tradition. It is Xerxes, he declares, who alone diverges from the mold, who does not faithfully repeat the pattern of his forefathers, who brings destruction upon his people (779–86). Darius' emphasis on the rift between generations, which is then zealously taken up by the Chorus (852–906), departs substantially from the traditional Greek narrative which saw Xerxes' expedition, and its failure, as a replication of his father's earlier

defeats.¹²¹ The artificial schism, positing an unbridgeable gap between father and son, finds further expression in the physical segregation of the characters on the dramatic stage. As Mark Griffith observes, although Xerxes is said to tear his robes under his father's pitying gaze in Atossa's reported dream (197–9), the scene does not find embodied expression in an on-stage reenactment.¹²² By the time the defeated Xerxes makes his return to Sousa, his father's spirit has departed once more into the darkness below (839).

The temporal disjunction between father and son creates a rupture on the stage, the segregation of bodies within the drama mirroring the schism that the revenant has described. With Xerxes' arrival, the *here* and *now* of the theater at the close of the play is distanced from, even while remaining the same as, the *here* and *now* it had been only moments before. Yet, as Atossa's dream-vision attests, the rift only obtains in what is seen on-stage – not in the *elsewheres* that give the stage-action its shape. Just as the young Xerxes' reenactment of his father's martial campaign cannot be effaced by the dead Darius' words, so too the correspondences between father and son are not dissolved by their inability to inhabit the same place. As he made his way to Greece tracing Darius' footsteps, so too Xerxes' return, like that of Pindar's Alcmaeon, reprises the journey of his father the revenant. The absent presence of the ghost on-stage is recast as the living king arrives in a body longing for the grave.

ἰὼ,
 δύστηνος ἐγὼ στυγεράς μοίρας
 τῆσδε κυρήσας ἀτεκμαρτοτάτης, 910
 ὡς ὠμοφρόνως δαίμων ἐνέβη
 Περσῶν γενεᾶ· τί πάθω τλήμων;
 λέλυται γὰρ ἐμῶν γυίων ῥώμη
 τήνδ' ἡλικίαν ἐσιδόντ' ἄστων·
 εἴθ' ὄφελε, Ζεῦ, κάμει μετ' ἄνδρων 915

¹²¹ Griffith 2007: 124–5 who sees the discrepancy as “an essential component in the dynamics of youthful aristocratic endeavor.”

¹²² Griffith 2007: 125.

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τῶν οἰχομένων
θανάτου κατὰ μοῖρα καλύψαι.

(*Pers.* 908–17)

Oh, oh, I am miserable, having met with this hateful and entirely unintelligible fate. How savagely has a god trampled over the Persian race. What thing do I suffer, wretch that I am? For the strength has been loosened from my limbs as I look upon the age of these citizens. If only, Zeus, the fate of death would cover me as well together with the men who have departed.

The pitiable sight of Xerxes with tattered garments on his still-living body – a vision amply foreshadowed in the lead-up to his entrance¹²³ – reverses the luxurious dress of Darius’ spectral return.¹²⁴ Where Darius manifested his glorious presence despite his death, Xerxes’ presence is colored only by the frame of absences into which he has stepped. Xerxes longs to join the dead below the earth. His performative mourning is, in the words of Murnaghan, “a form of mimesis that falls short of direct imitation,” drawing the living body as close to death as possible while still retaining an embodied presence.¹²⁵ Xerxes speaks of his body as though already devoid of life, adapting the well-known Homeric phrasing of the dead warrior’s “loosened limbs” (λέλυται γὰρ ἐμῶν γυίων ῥώμη) to describe his grief, and speaks of his “hateful fate” (στυγεράς μοίρας) in language that suggests death (the alternate sense of death being emphasized by its almost immediate repetition θανάτου κατὰ μοῖρα).¹²⁶ Later, as the Chorus begin to grieve for the lost men of Persia (918–30), Xerxes will declare himself to be the object of their lamentation: *I, here, am the one, oi oi, to be lamented.* ὅδ’ ἐγὼν οἰοῖ αἰακτός 931). In contrast to the messenger and Darius, who marveled at their unexpected homecomings, Xerxes says nothing of his return beyond the grief that the sight of the Chorus brings him. His thoughts, like his body,

¹²³ 199, 468, 832–50.

¹²⁴ Said 2007: 89.

¹²⁵ Murnaghan 1988: 30.

¹²⁶ On Homeric formulae for death, see Morrison 1999: esp. 131. On Xerxes’ enervation, see Griffith 2007: 115.

Conclusion

are trained on those who are not present, the “departed” (τῶν οἰχομένων, echoing the Chorus’ words in the play’s first line) with whom he too belongs. The dead of whom Xerxes speaks are the countless soldiers lost in a battle far from home, but alongside them is the specter of his father, a man twice departed whose absence now circumscribes and shapes the body of his still-living son.

The Chorus fill the theater with a song of those who have not returned, demanding that Xerxes account for the men who are not here: *Where is the rest of the throng of dear ones? Where are the ones who stood beside you?* ποῦ δὲ φίλων ἄλλος ὄχλος; / ποῦ δὲ σοι παραστάται (956–7); *Oi oi, where is Pharnuchus, and noble Ariomardus?* οἰοιοῖ †ποῦ δέ† σοι Φαρνοῦχος† Ἀριόμαρδος τ’ ἀγαθός; (966–7); *And where is the other we yearn for?* καὶ μὲν ἄλλον γε ποθοῦμεν (992) *Did you leave them? did you leave them?* ἔλιπες ἔλιπες; (985).¹²⁷ As the Chorus sing, Xerxes’ desire for his lost men mounts (988–9). His defeated body, he explains, is not only clad in rent garments, but denuded of his men (γυμνός εἰμι προπομπῶν 1036). As the lament continues, Xerxes seeks to transform the Chorus, aged bodies whose presence only reminds him of all the bodies now gone, into a ruined form to match his own. *Lay waste to the white hairs of your beard* (καὶ μοι γενείου πέρθε λευκὴν τρίχα 1056); *Rend your flowing garments with your hands* (πέπλον δ’ ἔρεικε κολπίαν ἀκμῇ χερῶν 1060). All those in the theater will become, like Xerxes himself, surrogates for the absent dead. On the very spot that had allowed the ghost of Darius to rise from below, Xerxes seeks to create a world shaped entirely by those who are not there.

Conclusion

In both Pindar’s P. 8 and Aeschylus’ *Persians* the theatrical resonances of generational continuity, of fathers finding their bodies reproduced and their deeds reenacted through their

¹²⁷ Discussing the affective power of the Chorus’ lament, Gurd 2016: 70–2 observes that the power of the song is predicated on its strong repetitions, especially the iterative questions introduced by ποῦ, which lend the catalogue of foreign names a certain “material reality.” On the resonances of the catalogue, see Ebbott 2000.

offspring, give shape to a distinctly spectral form of choral performance. The iterative and syncopated rhythms of somatic surrogacy are heightened as the spirits of the past, residing in the unseen realm of the *there* and *then*, come to once again inhabit the *here* and *now*. These hauntings are exceptional in their intensity, but the qualities of recurrence and return, of temporal and spatial disjunction and conflation, that they represent are found throughout the songs of Pindar and Aeschylus. In this chapter I have asked these emblematic revenants, masters of the theatrical return, to serve as guides through the divergent landscapes of our two poets' works. Residing elsewhere, these ghosts are able to shed the clearest light on the different types of *here* that Pindar and Aeschylus create through song.

In Aeschylus' dramatic compositions, the *here* of the stage is endowed with an immediate and material structure, standing as the visible and repeatedly referenced linchpin against and through which many *elsewheres* are made apparent. For Pindar, by contrast, the absent *here* yields an insistent and vertiginously adaptable space, a portal to *elsewheres* that is itself incapable of fixity. Pindar's theatrical bodies and voices float within an ever-shifting land- and time-scape. Aeschylus' voices and bodies are equally malleable and recursive, yet they take form within a world of clearly delineated boundaries. The distinction is an important one, but it does not negate the commonalities that join these two theatrical poets. The fact that in *Persians* Darius – and also Atossa and the Chorus, and later Xerxes – is *here now*, present in Sousa before his own tomb, but also present on the stage in the form of a living surrogate who gives him voice and body, does not erase the spatio-temporal paradoxes of theatrical performance. Darius' ghostly return, like that of Pindar's Amphiaraus and Alcmaeon, is a celebration of the many other places and times that underpin, that shape and enable the sense of performative presence that their songs generate. For both poets, the unseen elsewhere is always capable of impinging on, displacing, or unsettling the constructed present. The stuff of song – infinitely replicable, bestowed upon ready surrogates – finds its match in the worlds that songs create.

CONCLUSION

The intertwining patterns of recursion that I have traced throughout this book present a portrait of Pindar and Aeschylus as two choral poets joined by a shared approach to performance as a practice of theatrical reenactment. My comparative analysis has looked beyond simple historical contemporaneity, trying instead to hear echoes of an imaginary conversation encoded within their songs. I have approached the fictional exchange conjured by this conceit from a number of different vantages, adopting the method of prismatic iteration that Pindar and Aeschylus deploy to such powerful effect within their songs.

Pindar and Aeschylus do not lay exclusive claim to the spectral theater of the fifth century, nor were they alone in bringing the iterative rhythms and surrogate structures of reenactment to light in their compositions. Other ancient poets undoubtedly shared Pindar's and Aeschylus' fascination with the recursive nature of performance. Nevertheless, the specific contours of ghostly recurrence that I have traced here, from the revenant voices brought back to life through embedded speech to the necromantic instruments that summon bodies from the beyond, emerge from a distinctive connection between these two poets. The claims made in this book are informed by, but do not seek to engage, the broader choral discourse in which Pindar's and Aeschylus' compositions took shape. The ghostly conversation conjured here represents one duet heard within the raucous chorus of fifth-century song.

In an attempt to understand the particular shape that "never for the first time" takes in the songs of Pindar and Aeschylus,

each chapter has explored their shared patterns of repetition and surrogacy, replication and re-embodiment, from a slightly different angle. The progression through this broad landscape has not aimed for totality, but rather has sought to trace a sequence of interconnected passages that typify Pindar's and Aeschylus' shared notion of theatrical reenactment. Like the revenants of Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs, each facet of this theatrical conversation replicates and reprises forms set out elsewhere. Adopting the distinctive approach of both poets to embedded speech as a basic model of recursive surrogacy, we have seen how its syncopated rhythms find expression in and bodies and ultimately in the shadowy realm of ghostly semblances. In their rendering of each, even when they differ, Pindar and Aeschylus reveal an understanding of performance as an exercise in reenactment, of creating a *here* and *now* that is suffused with *theres* and *thens*.

The structures explored in this book arise from what remains to us of the songs of Pindar and Aeschylus, artifacts of fifth-century choral spectacles that necessarily convey only a partial and fugitive glimpse of the historical events to which they were once attached. The theatrical outlook that has been the focus of this book is surely not the only one that these two poets might have shared. It is, however, a facet of their work that has been largely absent from scholarly discussions in recent decades, which have taken genre, context, and occasion to be the essential factors in shaping archaic choral song. I hope that the approach that I have undertaken here, one which is historically informed but does not privilege a singular moment, a unique *here* and *now*, of performance as determinative of meaning, will contribute to expanding the scope of research sustained by the study of ancient performance. Central to such modes of interpretation, which seek to reflect upon facets of performance that cannot be assimilated to the context or parameters of a particular historical event, is an awareness of the essential multiplicity of performance itself. Drawing on theoretical insights from contemporary performance studies, this study represents one version of how we might recognize the multiplicity of ancient song, to resist the urge to treat

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fifth-century performance as historical fact, as an event that can be definitively located and described, if only the evidence were forthcoming.

My recourse to idioms and approaches developed by scholars outside of the world of Classics, elucidating performances that are quite conspicuously removed from the world of fifth-century Greek choral song, may strike some as anachronistic. But, as the syncopated iterations of Pindar's and Aeschylus' songs make clear, anachronistic harmonies are an integral feature of performance already anticipated by our poets. In this respect, performance studies is heir to the tradition of historically informed ahistoricism that was a hallmark of the many structuralist analyses through which the ancient world was so brilliantly illuminated in the second half of the twentieth century. In describing the methodology of his structuralist interpretation of myth, Claude Lévi-Strauss observed that his approach "eliminates a problem which has been so far one of the main obstacles to the progress of mythological studies, namely, the quest for the *true* version, or the *earlier* one."¹ For Lévi-Strauss, a myth is defined "as consisting of all its versions; to put it otherwise: a myth remains the same as long as it is felt as such."² Thus Freud's psychoanalytic account of Oedipus is no less "authentic" than Sophocles' dramatic treatment, since the essential structural patterns of the myth are equally the heart of both. The same can be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of performance, which embeds its syncopated temporal structures within the ever-renewable present of a synchronic *here* and *now*.

The *here* and *now* of performance is, as has long been recognized, created through embodied action, and as such it demands a certain affective, embodied imagination that is situated in an understanding of what it means to see and feel bodies, our own and those of others. The conversation between Pindar and Aeschylus that I have imagined and tried to describe here is an attempt to do just that – to incorporate certain forms

¹ Lévi-Strauss 1955: 435.

² Lévi-Strauss 1955: 435.

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of embodied creativity into a scholarly undertaking. It is a conversation that likely never took place, and certainly did not take the form that I have given it in the readings and propositions that I have presented. It is also overtly informed by the discourse of contemporary performance studies and by the twenty-first-century concerns that shape how we think about performance and theater today. I have tried, as far as possible, to ground my imagined conversation in the world of fifth-century Greek performance, the world in which Pindar and Aeschylus could have sat down to talk. But I am acutely aware that this world exists primarily as a construct of my own literary imagination, together with that of other classicists who have sought to recover something of the lived reality of poetic performance in ancient Greece.

The continued life of past performance is contingent on the present, on the avenues through which we can step into and, to whatever circumscribed and phantasmagorical degree, inhabit a place and time that was once the here and now. In this sense, past performance represents its own elsewhere, yet another conjured reality of the not *not* – not *not* a real event, not *not* something one can reclaim, not *not* a moment never to be regained. It is a space of unheard voices and unseen bodies that nevertheless makes itself present again. The project of engaging with ancient Greek performance is itself a theatrical undertaking. The interpretive model that I have adopted to describe Pindar's and Aeschylus' approach to performance is, then, contiguous with my own thinking about what it means to study the work of these authors.

The act of critical interpretation, no less than that of embodied (re)performance, furnishes us with an opportunity to contemplate the relationship between the seen and unseen, present and absent. The theatrical approach that I have taken here encourages us, as contemporary scholars, to embrace the distance – spatial, temporal, conceptual – between us and the past performances that we seek, in some meager way, to revive through interpretation. If, as Tracy Davis has observed, the study of performance is “not so much a discipline as

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a conversation,”³ the conversation between Pindar and Aeschylus that I have tried to imagine is also a meditation on what it means to imagine performance, to practice scholarship as a conversation. The relationship of these distinct moments – the *here* and *now* of critical performance and the *thens* and *theres* of the performances we reimagine – is not unlike that of the embedded speeches with which this study began: vocally isolated, asymmetrical, characterized by unconventional structures of time, and yet harmonious despite their anachronism. Just as Pindar and Aeschylus work to incorporate and reveal the many *theres* and *thens* that contribute to the *here* and *now* of their songs, so too the *here* and *now* of scholarly interpretation is built around the edifice of an unseen elsewhere. We should not shy away from acknowledging this absent foundation. Its fantastic quality – its status as (mere) semblance – is no different than that of performance itself.

³ Quoted in Taylor 2016: 201.

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